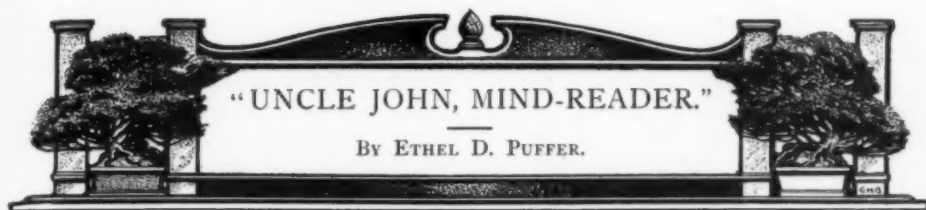


# ST. NICHOLAS.

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NO. 3.



IF Peggy had not been so deeply absorbed in her thoughts she must have heard the footsteps of her Uncle John when he came and looked over her shoulder. The autumn rain was dripping from the dull yellow leaves of the trees, and whirling them in tempestuous voyages down the gutters on both sides of the street, beating the scanty grass on the lawn, the patient horses, and shivering passers-by in a persistent attack, as if determined to make its last effort of spite before the soft snow should wrap the landscape in its comforting embrace. Not a summery outlook, certainly, nor one in which you would have expected a lively little girl to find such promise of out-of-door enjoyment as would keep her restless attention chained for the long, silent half-hour that had passed; and yet this extraordinary uncle leaned over and whispered in the golden-veiled little ear:

"I think that you will certainly win in *next* June's tennis tournament, Peggy!"

Peggy wheeled round on the window-seat, quite pale with astonishment.

"How in all the world did you guess that I was thinking of the tournament?" she quavered. "I have n't said one word!"

"Oh, I 'm a modern magician, you know," answered Uncle John, gravely. "Any inquiries to make to-day about future events?"

"No; but truly," Peggy was insisting, when a gruff voice was heard from under the table, where a pair of spectacles seemed to be in imminent danger of falling into a bulky volume, — that may have been Cæsar, but looked like "Gulliver's Travels," — read in semi-darkness between two dusty elbows.

"I 'll bet a penny," said the voice, "that you can't tell what I 'm thinking of!"

"Perhaps not exactly, most valiant nephew," said Uncle John, speaking this time with slow, rolling intonation and the air of a tragedy hero, "but I would wager the half of my ducats that — at — this — very — moment — you — are — wondering if Bacon wrote Shakspeare. Am I right?"

The spectacled youth — Ted was fourteen, but looked older — was open-mouthed. "My gracious, you almost hit it!" he cried. "I *was* wondering if Shakspeare ever visited Venice. Now, did you read my thoughts, honestly?"

"We shall have to call you 'Uncle John, Mind-Reader,'" was Peggy's suggestion.

Uncle John settled himself leisurely in his big leather chair and turned a twinkling eye upon the eager children. "I was only tapping the regular telegraph line," said he, teasingly. "Ran a little ahead of time in your case, Ted."

"Uncle, you are horrid!" cried Peggy. "I just believe you willed us to think those things, like the wicked goblin I was reading about yesterday in my 'Gray Fairy Book.'"

"Well, I did and I did n't, little Peggy. Would you really like to know? It would n't bother you to hear a real explanation? After all, there 's nothing simpler in the world than my little trick. See, this is the idea of it: Suppose old Rover here on the hearth-rug hears you calling on the other side of a field of Deacon Jones's best timothy. He never stops to think that Deacon Jones will be furious, not he! He plunges across, the quickest way. Well, now, the next time Rover comes by that field, how is he most likely to go across? By his own path, is n't he? The way he went before. And if you stood on the other side and heard him barking, you 'd know pretty well at what spot the old brown nose would appear. Now in that restless brain of yours you 're making paths for thought all the time. You know that the postman does n't often bring you anything but your good ST. NICHOLAS, and you 've made a little path between your thought of mail-time and your magazine — and when the end of the month comes on, I fancy you travel that path pretty often when you hear the postman's ring. But for every thought you have half a dozen possible paths; only the one you travel oftenest is the one you 're likely to travel next time, and by just the same stations."

"I see," said Peggy, thoughtfully. "Then something made you think just now I was traveling my tennis-path?"

"Yes. About ten minutes ago Mr. Jenkins passed the window. Now, we don't know Mr. Jenkins very well; the only thing we notice about him is that every summer afternoon we see him driving out to the Athletic Club — easiest path for Mr. Jenkins! Well, then, Athletic Club. I knew you did n't play golf; I knew you delighted in tennis — easiest path away from the Athletic Club. Then I knew

you wanted immensely to win the girls' cup; and I will confess I saw you put your arm into position for a good serve, — though that was 'no fair,' of course, — and there you are!"

"And for me," said Ted, "you willed me to think of Shakspeare, did n't you? I know my first thought, when you began to speak so solemnly and slowly, was Henry Irving as I heard him last week."

"You 're right, Ted; and the path was opened to Venice by throwing the word 'ducats' in your way. But I 'd heard you discussing the Bacon matter yesterday with your father, and took my chances of your getting to that point in time for my question. So you see it 's like a sausage-mill: I throw in my meat at one end, and I can look for its coming out again in the particular kind of sausage you offer. Peggy makes 'em flavored with fresh air, and dew, and little girls' games; but you, old fellow, use decidedly musty spices of the Orient and bygone days. Then, there 's another thing, to go back to our paths: it is n't always the oldest and the broad-trodden, but sometimes the newest, if it is pretty deep-plowed, that you 'll take. You remember how I expected you to take the Bacon one, because you made that only yesterday."

Ted was plunged in meditation, gazing with wrinkled forehead into the fire. "I don't think I like that," said he. "You 'd know all a fellow 's up to, supposing you know his paths."

"That 's the point," laughed Uncle John — "supposing I know his paths! But I can tell you there are lots of things to find out about a fellow's paths. Suppose you and Peggy take your pencils, and I 'll show you what I mean."

Ted drew his fountain-pen from his pocket, but Peggy would not be satisfied until she had possessed herself of Uncle John's silver pencil and a sheet of mama's best stiff and crested note-paper.

"Now here 's a good gray word," said Uncle John; "no especial paths made for it, no especial exploration of its country, so we can start fair. Now write down as quickly as possible a list of words in the order in which they come into your minds after writing the first word, and — we shall see what we shall see. Attention! Present pencils! Now, all ready: Horse!"

For three minutes there was a diligent scratching. Ted stared into vacancy, and now and again made as if he would clutch a hovering thought, and Peggy suspended her pencil in the air; but they put the final flourish together. Here are the lists as Uncle John read them out:

| PEGGY.       |             | TED.        |              |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| horse        | Dr. Lane    | horse       | perseverance |
| carriage     | examination | quadruped   | gymnastics   |
| drive        | grandma     | Jungle Book | Greece       |
| trees        |             | Kipling     |              |
| birds' nests |             | author      |              |
| collection   |             | fame        |              |
| school       |             | study       |              |

"Peggy, my dear," said Uncle John, "it is easy to see how your mind works. You love woods and out-of-door games; and the school, and Dr. Lane your teacher, and the examination lead your thoughts only to what comes after them in spring—grandma's farm and all your country sports. And your paths are between things all of the same kind—every-day things that have been together in the same picture in your mind, so that the paths between them are well worn. As for you, Ted, it's not hard, of course, to trace the reading and study that most interest you now. But more important is the way you think. Quadruped and author, you'll notice, are more *general*, as we say—that is, refer to larger classes of objects than horse and Kipling; and the thing that made the path between them easy is not their being together in experience, like Peggy's horse and carriage, but the fact that the quality of four-leggedness, which a horse has, is the mark of the quadruped. It's as if you broke up the notion 'horse,' and took a part of it, and made that the name of a class. The philosopher would say that you went from the single or particular to the general—and that's what he does himself! I'm not sure you have n't the making of a Lord Bacon in yourself, old fellow!"

"Oh, Ted, how splendid!" broke in Peggy; but her uncle had not finished his talk.

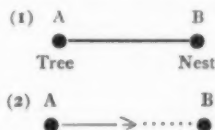
"Now, the name of this path-traveling in the mind," he went on, "is the association of ideas; and according to the kinds of ideas that are associated together—that have paths between them, you know—we name it *outer* or *inner* association: outer for the ideas of things that

we've seen together in the world, like Peggy's horse and carriage, as I said before; inner for the ideas of things that have n't time or place in common, but only another idea—like Ted's four-leggedness."

Peggy laughed out here, and was frowned on by her philosophical brother, who then proceeded to show the character his uncle had given him.

"I don't see yet what makes one thought come after another," he insisted. "It is n't just like Rover, after all—for Rover was looking out for the easiest way. He knew beforehand what he wanted—to get across the field to me. But when I'm thinking, I don't know beforehand what I want, and I'm certainly not looking out for the easiest way to think."

"Ted," said Uncle John, "you are a rash boy, for you have brought on yourself a rather long explanation, without which I can't answer your question. You know, of course, that you can't think without that active brain of yours, which is made up of billions of tiny cells and nerve-paths between the cells. For thinking is n't your brain; and yet for every movement of your thought something happens there. What it is we don't know, but perhaps something like an electric current from cell to cell along the nerve-paths. Now, suppose sometime last summer Peggy was in the woods and went bird-nesting. The ideas of the trees and the birds' nests were together in her mind, and some kind of a change took place in her brain, corresponding to each idea. We'll say—just for a rough scheme—that the little brain-cell A" (Uncle John drew out his pencil) "was

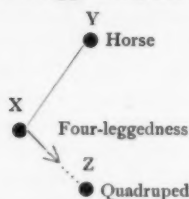


charged or excited for the tree, and the little cell B for the nest. And then there was a breaking through of this current of the nerve-path between A and B, because both were active at the same time. Now, next time when A was charged with a current—when Peggy thought of carriage and then of trees—that little nerve-path which had been broken through

once before between A and B let the current through again to cell B, and consequently, B being excited, Peggy thought of birds' nests again."

"But horse and quadruped were never together in any such way in my life, Uncle John."

"I don't know, my boy; they may have been. Perhaps you saw the words together in the dictionary; and, if not, the parts of them were. That is, a horse has a good many other qualities besides his four-leggedness, but four-leggedness



belongs to horses and quadrupeds together. Now, if the brain-cell X for four-leggedness has sometimes had a current between it and Z for quadruped, and sometimes between it and Y for horse, when X is excited,—as when I said 'horse,'—then the current is likely to break right through where it had been before—and then you think of quadruped. And now, since I'm among the big words, I may as well give you two more. What we've been playing with is what they call *successive* association—"

"One idea after the other?" put in Ted.

"Just so. But did you ever think that we often have a lot of ideas at once? If I say 'ocean,' you hear the word, and you get an image of the big blueness and the sails and gulls, and a feeling of the salt air, and all those ideas rush together to make the one meaning. The sound of the word 'ocean' sends a current all at once into all those other ideas that make up the whole. Don't you know, when one particular kind of clang is heard down the street, Ted, you think the word 'fire-engine'?—and the picture of a shining thing with men hanging over it, and galloping horses, and general excitement; and all these ideas rush together, so that, at the second of hearing the clang, you shout and rush to the window. Well, that sort of thing we call *simultaneous* association."

"Uncle John," said Peggy, "you know last

night I was thirsty, and I crept down in the dark to get a glass of water from the side-board, and in the hall I ran across something big and furry—oh, I nearly screamed out with fright! But the next minute I touched a button, and I almost laughed out. What do you suppose it was? Your big fur-lined coat—it just came over me in a flash! and I could just see the nice old gray thing with the frogs and the big collar: was that si—simultaneous association?"

"Exactly," said Uncle John. "Something like playing blindman's-buff. If I catch a tip of your curls, I can see and hear and touch you all at once—you and all your naughtiness!"

"But, Uncle John," pursued Ted, "I'm not sure that it works that way with me. When I run across anything in the dark, I don't see a picture of the thing in my mind. It's as though something shouted it out at me—'table!' or 'sofa!' And when you say 'ocean,' I don't see it, or only a little. I think of the waves dashing, and the wind whistling in the sails."

"Well, well!" cried his uncle. "We're finding out all your secrets! Do you know you have an auditory imagination? That means you think first with your ears, so to speak. It's just as truly simultaneous association as the other, only your paths are between ideas of sound, of hearing, and not of sight. Peggy, here, is a visualizer." Peggy looked scared. "That means, of course, that she thinks mostly in terms of sight. Now, I am what they call a motor type; that is, I think in terms of moving. And my simultaneous association, even for fire-engine, is n't half so much of the shining object as of the dash which I make to the window to see it; and for 'ocean,' it is much more my own movements in swimming, or even of saying the word 'ocean' with my own lips. Of course these different ways of imagining and remembering things can be combined in the same person, nearly always are so, only usually some one way is stronger than the others. Did you ever hear of the curious diseases called mental blindness and deafness? I knew a man once who was afflicted with the first. If he saw a table, for instance, he did n't know what it was for; could n't call it by name. His boots he would be as likely to call his hair-brush



as anything; and yet if he *touched* the things, he knew at once what they were. You see what had happened. His association-paths for sight-sensations had been broken up. What kind of association was it that was lacking, Ted?"

"Simultaneous!" cried Ted, proudly. "Because the sight of the boots ought to have sent the current rushing to the sound of the word 'boots,' and the motions he would make putting them on, and — oh, everything!"

"Well," said Uncle John, "then perhaps Peggy can tell me how mental deafness would act. If a man really hears a bell ring, but is mentally deaf—"

"Why, then," said Peggy, doubtfully, "I suppose he would know that something was there, but he would n't know what it was, or see a picture of it in his mind, or obey its call to dinner."

"Well, then, since you are such clever children, perhaps you can tell me which kind of disease would be worse for each of you—Ted, the auditory, and Peggy, the visual young person."

This was easy. "Why, mental deafness," cried Ted, "for me, because most of my simultaneous associations come in sound, and I understand sounds better." And Peggy was equally sure that, as she always paid more attention to the looks of things, not to understand what she saw would be dreadful.

"Dear me!" said Uncle John, at length. "I'm finding out about all your paths more than I ever knew before. And you see what a dangerous thing it is to get any paths broken

through that you don't want to be dependent on or to go on using."

Ted was quite pale. "But, uncle, that's perfectly frightful!" he cried. "Suppose I do something selfish

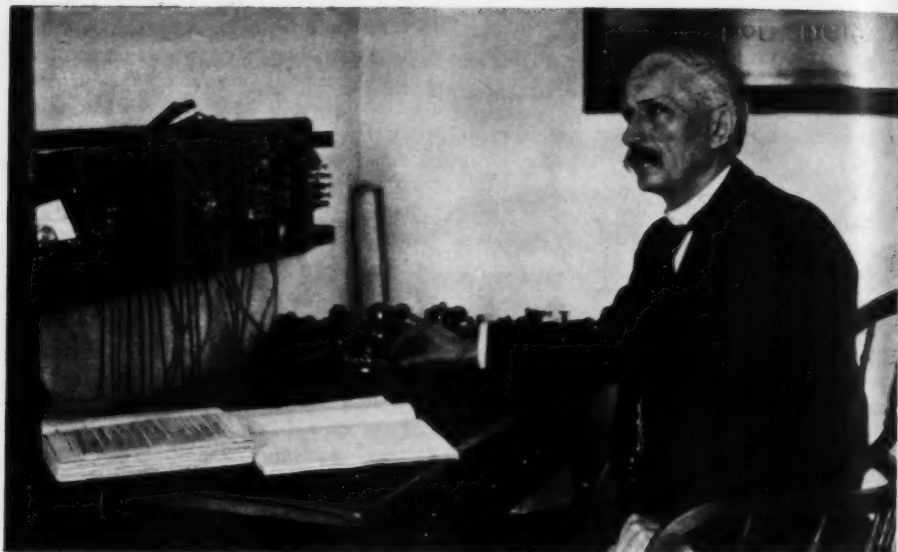
once, or suppose I think of something very wrong or mean once—then that old nerve-path is there, ready to break out again as soon as one end of it is touched up,—and I've got to think the mean thing, have I? Uncle John, have I got to think always of telling a lie—every time I get caught whispering in school?"

Peggy looked up as if she remembered something, and Uncle John had clearly not forgotten that shameful episode, either.

"I suppose you have, old fellow, unless you break out over and over again some new path for the current to take. Make your new path deep and wide enough, and it will go on broadening itself until the old one is quite overgrown. Make your new resolution a regular shock! Do you remember our discussion last year about Dan O'Brien's taking the pledge? How you said it was nonsense that a man with intelligence enough to keep a whole greenhouse going should n't have enough sense to know what drunkenness meant to himself and his family? and how I encouraged his resolve? That was just to make his new path deep enough. Every time he thinks of the drink now, the brain-path to church and the signed promise and his wife's joyful face is shorter than the brain-path to the saloon; and every time the current does n't break through and he does n't go down to the corner, there's a deeper track in the one path and a weed grown in the other. Pretty soon the current can't break through any more. Well, Ted, you're about to remark that my figures are getting mixed, as indeed they are. But I'll tell you there's nothing that's so dread-

ful or so comforting to think of as this matter of these brain-paths of association—dreadful or comforting according as you find that you're drifting wrong or steering right."





PROFESSOR PAYNE AT THE TELEGRAPH-KEY GIVING THE TIME SIGNAL OVER ELEVEN THOUSAND MILES OF WIRE.

## HOW WE SET OUR WATCHES BY A STAR.

By W. S. HARWOOD.

It seems as if we are doing about everything we wish to do these days: we harness the lightning, hitch it up to our thought, and drive it around the world in the twinkle of an eye; we whisper, and our friend hears us a hundred miles away; we turn a button in the dark, and call a messenger from the unseen, and the invisible sprite makes our room to glow like mid-day; we are even getting our wings in trim to fly, and who knows but that one of these fine days we may set sail on the ocean of the air at New York in the morning and take supper in Chicago?

We are living in an age of magic—such magic as the fancies of the old-time story-tellers never matched.

While we know a good many things about the mysterious in our modern life, yet perhaps a good many people do not know very much about one of the very common acts of their life—the setting of their timepieces. Whenever you are in doubt, these days of miracles, as to whether your watch is keeping good time or

not, you set it by a star. You might have a sun-dial and try to set it by that, or you might have an hour-glass and let the sand run in and out of its cone-like sections, or you might try to keep your timepiece in good running order by the rising and the setting of the sun as recorded in the almanac; but any one of these methods would, in these days of precision, be apt to throw you out of gear with the rest of the world. You could n't catch trains on such time, and the tardy-list in the schools would be black with names if boys and girls attempted to go to school on such time as this.

No; you must set your watch by a star if you wish to be up with the times these days.

Out of the vast number of stars in the heavens, and visible to the eye at night, and out of the much greater multitude that celestial photography is bringing forth on its negatives, there are some six hundred that may be depended upon, stars that have so long been watched by the astronomers that they are known to be practically invariable. Any one of these you

may set your watch by, but it would be rather a difficult thing for you to pick out the star you wanted yourself, and even if you should select the right one, you would not be likely to know just how to go to work to regulate your timepiece.

For about two centuries most of these six hundred stars have been under the critical eyes of the astronomers, who have measured their exact places in the skies again and again. It has thus come to be known that these stars cross the meridian of any place at certain times every night. The meridian of any place is the line the sun crosses there at noon—an imaginary line from pole to pole, directly overhead, dividing east and west. The times when the stars so cross the meridian are predicted by the astronomer years in advance, and tables are made which are exact to a small fraction of a second. After the astronomers, through long series of years of testing, found this out, it occurred to somebody that here was a perfect test for timepieces. Perhaps we owe it mainly to the great railroad companies that the time of the country finally became regulated throughout the length and breadth of the land. Railroad companies must have regularity in their schedules; they cannot run their trains according to clocks and watches that do not agree; priceless human life and property beyond valuation would pay the penalty of such policy.

It is three minutes to nine o'clock at night. The official in charge of a great observatory, the Goodsell Observatory, Northfield, Minnesota, is preparing to send out the time to the people living in his section of America. For sixty seconds he rattles away on a telegraph-instrument at his desk, spelling out the word "time, time, time"; then he waits an instant. Then he turns to his telegraph-key again. Eleven thousands of miles of wire are open to him; he is ruler of them all. Every telegraph-instrument in all the vast territory of which the Goodsell Observatory is the center is silent; every operator has taken his hand from his key; throughout the whole length of these thousands of miles there is a strange silence.

The seconds are slowly ticking away. Above the head of the observer there is a great observatory clock. At precisely two minutes to

nine, after the telegraphers all along the miles of wire have been notified and have withdrawn their hands from the keys, the wires are switched into a connection with the very clock itself, and all along the eleven thousands of miles there is no sound but the tick, tick, tick of the observatory clock. Every beat of the great arteries of commerce is stopped; every throb of the news of all lands going out night by night over these wires from the great heart of the world ceases; even the sad messages of death and suffering, as well as the gay ones that tell of little babies born and young folks married and reunions of friends promised—all these must wait while the great clock on the wall makes itself understood in the language of time and eternity over these many thousands of miles.

Something strangely solemn is in one's thoughts as he stands beside the observer amid the silent seconds while the clock ticks on. Whoever is listening at the wire along its course, waiting to set his watch, whether he be a railroad employee or some man in a large jeweler's establishment where the people go to get their timepieces regulated, knows the system, and knows that there is a sudden pause just before the exact stroke of nine o'clock—a broken beat in the ticking. Then all carefully note their timepieces as the clock in the observatory ticks the nine-o'clock second. Thus they can tell to the second whether their watches are fast or slow or precisely right.

Attached to the clock is a simple device,—a wheel with teeth in it,—located behind the second-hand, which breaks the current at each even second. Thus the clock is ticking the time over the whole stretch of wire covering the thousands of miles of territory in the field of this particular observatory.

But the best-made clock in the world is not infallible; even our splendidly constructed observatory timepiece has its faults, and so somewhere there must be something to regulate even the regulator. This "somewhere" is in the sky, and the "something" is the silent clock-setting star in the far heavens, something that never changes, that has no shadow of variable-ness amid the changes of earth, a second-hand on the dial of God. The astronomer picks out a star chosen from the six hundred.

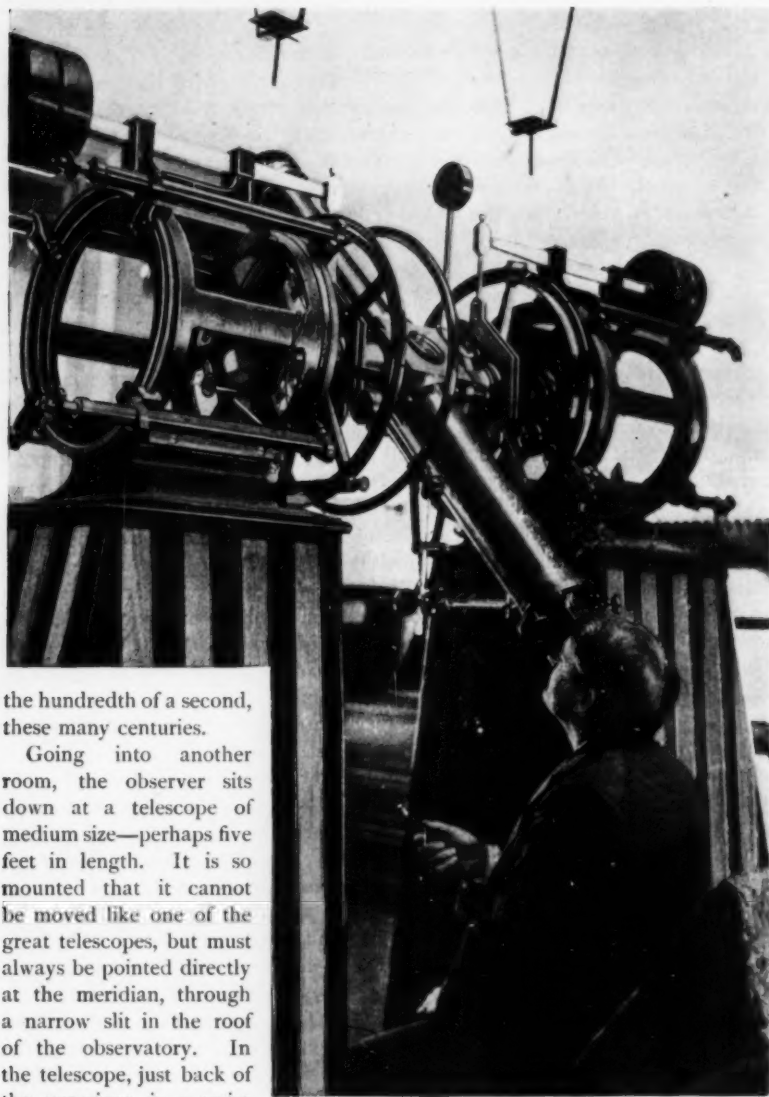
He knows by his catalogue the exact moment the star sweeps over his meridian at a certain time of night. The star has been on time, to

have these wires inside the telescope, serving the purpose of lines on the sky. There are eleven of these wires, and the middle one is the exact meridian — when

the star crosses that line it is the precise instant of its meridian time, the time to a hundredth of a second which is recorded in the catalogue of stars.

The observer holds in his hand, as he sits below the telescope, the telegraphic key attached to a long wire running out into another room, where the wire is attached to a little instrument called the chronograph, that is, time-writer. The chronograph has a cylinder about a foot in length and perhaps six inches or so in diameter. This cylinder is covered with white paper, and when you look at it you see many lines

on it all running parallel to one another. Attached to a tiny framework is a fountain-pen, the point resting on the paper. The cylinder slowly re-



the hundredth of a second, these many centuries.

Going into another room, the observer sits down at a telescope of medium size—perhaps five feet in length. It is so mounted that it cannot be moved like one of the great telescopes, but must always be pointed directly at the meridian, through a narrow slit in the roof of the observatory. In the telescope, just back of the eye-piece, is a series of very fine, thread-like wires. The observer has

no step-ladder tall enough for him to stand on its top and draw a chalk-mark across the sky, a meridian line for the star to cross, so he must

watching and recording the passing of a star over the meridian line. In the observer's hand is an electric key connected with the chronograph.

WATCHING AND RECORDING THE PASSING OF A STAR OVER THE MERIDIAN LINE.

In the observer's hand is an electric key connected with the chronograph.

volves, and as it does so the pen traces a line upon it. This line would be straight all the way around but for the fact that an electric connection is made with the clock, so that every second time the clock ticks it jars the pen, or interrupts it in its course, and it makes a little jog in the line.

The clock was set the night before, by the star when it crossed the meridian; but, for one reason or another, it may have lost or gained the fraction of a second. The observer at the eye-piece of the telescope watches the oncoming star with the very closest attention. The instant it comes into his field of vision, just as it begins crawling across the wires, he gives a squeeze to the telegraphic key. At the moment of this squeeze the fountain-pen, attached to the key by the wire, gives a tiny jump and makes a slight bending in the line. As the star crosses each wire the observer presses the key, so that there are eleven indentations made as the star crosses the field and passes out of sight on its celestial way. It has not been stopped a fraction of an inch in its journey through space, but the observer has timed it in transit, and no matter how fast it may have been fleeing through the heavens, it has yet been closely watched by the man at the telescope until he could record its movements. As the star passed the sixth wire the pressure for that line, its meridian line, registered the precise fraction of a second at which the star crosses the line. Then, as the clock has been marking its own time off on the cylinder second by second, the observer compares the time the clock has been making with the indentation the instrument recorded as the star crossed the meridian. Thus he can tell to the fractional part of a second the gain or loss in the time of the clock, and it is readjusted, or "set," as we say, to the unvarying time of the star.

The pressure of a key by the observer as the star crosses the precise meridian line seems a very simple thing—something that any one might do; but it is, notwithstanding, a most important thing to do, and connected with it is one of the most wonderful features in all the taking of the time of the stars—the "personal equation" of the observer. That is to say, the difference in the speed of action of mind and

body of those who record the passage of the star across the meridian must be taken into account in an exact determination of the time. Perhaps no two persons in the world are exactly alike; one person will see a thing, as we say, a trifle more quickly than another; there will be a shade of difference in the quickness of observation mental as well as physical, and this difference must be taken into account. In the case of Professor Payne and Professor Wilson of Goodsell Observatory (the two gentlemen to whom I am indebted for favors in the preparation of this article), the personal equation amounts to one third of a second. That means that one of these gentlemen will press the electric key as the star crosses the various lines in the telescope one third of a second quicker than the other one. Many tests were made in order to determine the difference, so that when one was recording the time he could make allowance, if necessary, for the other's greater swiftness or slowness, as the case might be.

The time is taken from this observatory for a large section of the country, reaching as far west as the Pacific coast, north to Winnipeg, east to Chicago, and southwest to Kansas City, Missouri. The time is sent out each week-day at ten in the morning as well as nine at night. From the Washington University in St. Louis the time is sent out over extensive railroad systems to the south. In the East the Naval Observatory at Georgetown Heights, in the city of Washington, is the center of the time service, and, indeed, time is sent out from this observatory over the whole United States. With the exception of Sundays, there are daily time signals sent out from this observatory, at noon, over the wires of the Western Union Telegraph Company. So important has this portion of the time service become that a special wire is used for much of the time-sending over this line, in order that business may not be interrupted. At three and three quarter minutes before noon the beats of the observatory clock, which has been adjusted to the time of one of the six hundred stars, begin to sound over this wire, which reaches over very many thousands of miles of territory. The last ten seconds before noon and the last five seconds

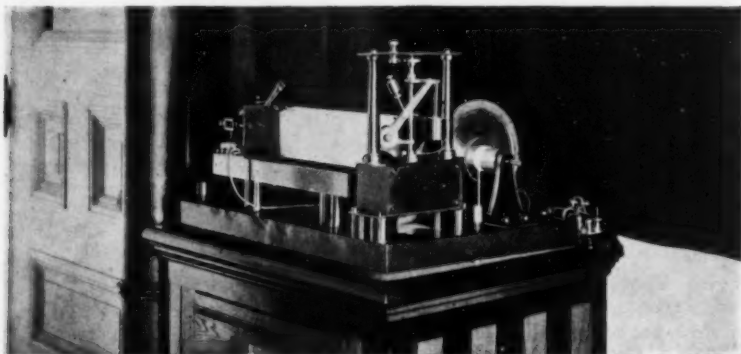


of each of the preceding three minutes are omitted in the time as sent out from Washington, as signals to the operators.

The great clock in the Naval Observatory is called the Master Clock. By means of the repeating-apparatus the time is repeated over eighteen different circuits to the various parts

satisfactory the time is absolutely identical throughout the entire system or systems over which the clock ticks.

There is a very practical feature of the time service. In these days of swift commercial enterprises, great business transactions sometimes hinge upon very small portions of time,



THE RECORDING CHRONOGRAPH, SHOWING THE FOUNTAIN-PEN IN POSITION.

of the country. New York City automatically repeats the time to all points east and north; Chicago and Cincinnati repeat to all points west and southwest; Richmond, Augusta, and Atlanta to all points south. If you should happen to be in some large telegraph-office at the moment the time signal is being sent out, it is likely you would see the operators at their keys take out their watches a few seconds before the time is due, open them, put a tiny piece of tissue-paper twisted into a thread between the spokes of one of the little wheels in their watches, holding back the movement to the instant the signal is given, then releasing the wheel so that the watch shall fall into the exact beat of the Master Clock in Washington.

Of course in all instruments there may be slight defects, so that now and then in the transmission of the time there may be slight, though very slight, errors, fractional parts of seconds, usually, however, and it may be that the wires themselves may be disturbed by atmospheric conditions or the fall of heavy sleet-storms. I am told by a gentleman familiar with railroad-ing that engineers allow, as a rule, ten seconds for variation in the time of watches and transmissions, though when the conditions are

so that the uniformity and accuracy of the time of the United States is of vast importance to the business world, while its importance in all the minor, but in some ways equally important, matters of life is very great.

Of course the same care must be taken whether the operators are to connect their instruments with a time-ball or a control-clock. The time-ball is an interesting feature of the service. It is a round ball large enough to be seen from the street where, supported by its appliances, it rests on the top of some building. It is attached by wire to the circuit from Washington in such a manner that, at the instant the Master Clock in Washington ticks the stroke of twelve, the delicately poised ball will fall, released by the same beat of the clock that announces the time to the rest of the country. Any one who watches one of these time-balls just before the stroke of twelve, timepiece in hand, may easily determine whether his watch is slow, fast, or on time.

Throughout the East these time-balls are dropped every day at noon, save on Sundays, at New York City, Boston, Newport (Rhode Island), Woods Holl (Massachusetts), Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Hampton Roads,

Savannah, and Fortress Monroe. The tick of the Master Clock that drops these time-balls also releases others, some of them many hundreds, indeed thousands, of miles away. For instance, by cable arrangement, a time-ball is dropped every day in the city of Havana, and another in San Francisco, three thousand miles distant. So incomprehensibly swift is the speed of the electric current that, if the repeating-instruments and the wires are in perfect condition, there is no appreciable difference in the time of the dropping of the ball in New York City and the dropping of the ball in San Francisco, each one released by the same tick of the Master Clock in the Naval Observatory in Washington.

Of course when the ball drops in Washington or New York at twelve o'clock noon it is not noon at points to the westward beyond the territory supplied with Eastern Time. For instance,

when it is twelve o'clock noon in Washington or New York it is eleven o'clock in the forenoon in the city of Chicago by Central Time, ten o'clock in Denver by Mountain Time, nine o'clock in San Francisco by Pacific Time. By this uniformity of time which has been established by law, however, the clocks of the people in San Francisco may be set each day by the observatory clock in Washington.

The variations in the clocks are due mainly to changes in temperature and to the condition of the atmosphere, so a careful record is kept, as the time is sent out, of the atmospheric conditions. One important reason for this is found in the fact that it may be cloudy weather at night, so that the observer could not watch his star as it filed past him in review, and by constantly observing the condition of the weather as shown in the barometer and the thermometer



THE OBSERVATORY CLOCK THAT TICKS A MESSAGE FROM A STAR.

the allowances may be made for the variation in the clock, though, of course, the only absolutely accurate test is the silent motion of a star millions upon millions of miles away.

Other lands besides our own have the same method for sending the correct time over wide sections of country. In England, for instance, the standard time is that of the observatory at Greenwich—the spot from which we reckon our degrees of longitude. In the main office of the Government Telegraph in London is a clock connected by wire with Greenwich. At two minutes to ten, every day, a bell rings, the telegraph lines are left free for the time service, so that the Greenwich Observatory Clock may give all England the time of day.

It seems very strange, when you come to think it over, that the chief factor in all this time service, which has now become so important a feature in our modern life, is a subtle, unseeable, indeed, if you will let me use the word, a non-understandable element. It does the bidding of its masters with unvarying obedience, but it resolutely refuses to disclose its identity or uncover its individuality.

Truly it is a time of magic in which we live. All nature joins man in the working of his miracles, and even the eternal stars in their marvelous sweep through the glittering night are willing to give us an answer far down through the infinite spaces of God to our oft-repeated question:

What time is it?

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## THE LITTLE MOTHER.

By M. M. D.

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Now, Dolly dear, I 'm going away.  
I want you to be good all day.  
Don't lose your shoes, nor soil your dress,  
Nor get your hair all in a mess;  
But sit quite still, and I will come  
And kiss you soon as I get home.  
I 'd take you, dear, but then, you know,  
It 's Wilhelmina's turn to go.  
She 's sick, I 'm 'fraid; her eyes don't work;  
They open worse the more I jerk.  
She used to be so straight and stout,  
But now her sawdust 's running out.  
Her arm is out of order, dear —  
My papa says she 's "out of gear."  
That 's dreadful, is n't it? But then,  
The air may make her well again.  
So, Dolly, you 'll be glad, I know,  
To have poor Wilhelmina go.  
Good-by, my precious; I must run —  
To-morrow we 'll have lots of fun.



FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN M. ALEXANDER.

THE LITTLE MOTHER.



## THE WYNDHAM GIRLS.

BY MARION AMES TAGGART.

*The following story is the third of the long stories complete in one number that are to appear in the present volume of ST. NICHOLAS.*

*Girls especially will enjoy the account of these three young heroines who, suddenly brought to face a trying situation, show themselves brave, cheery, and capable despite lack of preparation; but boy-readers, too, will be sure to vote the "Wyndham Girls" delightful friends. A touch of romance adds a pleasant flavor.*

### CHAPTER I.

#### "POOR HUMPTY-DUMPTY."

"No pink for me, please; I want that shimmering green, made up over shining white silk. It will make my glossy brown hair and eyes look like a ripe chestnut among its green leaves."

"Oh, Bab, such glistening sentences! 'Shimmering green,' 'shining white,' 'glossy hair'—you did n't mean glossy eyes, I hope! Besides, you know, chestnuts don't show among their green leaves; they stay in their burs until they drop off the trees."

"Now Phyllis, what's the use of spoiling a

poetical metaphor, figure—what do you call it? Which do you like best? Have you made up your mind, Jessamy?"

"I want all white; probably this mousseline-de-soie."

The soft May wind from the distant river blew the lace curtains gently to and fro, lifting the squares of delicate fabrics scattered over the couch on which the three young girls were sitting. Jessamy, the elder of the two Wyndham sisters, was at eighteen very beautiful, with dainty elegance of motion, refinement of speech, almost stately grace, unusual to her age and generation. Barbara, a year younger, was her opposite. Life, energy, fun, were declared in



every turn of her head and hands. Small in figure, with sparkling dark eyes and a saucy tilt of nose and chin, she could hardly have contrasted more sharply with her tall, gray-eyed, delicately tinted sister, and with what Bab herself called "Jessamy's Undine ways." The third girl, Phyllis, was twin in age to Jessamy, unlike either of the others in appearance and temperament. She was their cousin, the one child of their father's only brother; but as she had been brought up with them since her fourth year, Jessamy and Barbara knew no lesser kinship to her than to each other. At first glance Phyllis was not pretty; to those who had known her for even a brief time she was beautiful. Sweetness, unselfishness, content shone out from her dark blue eyes with the large pupils and dark lashes. Her lips rested together with the suggestion of a smile in their corners, and the clear pallor of her complexion was shaded by her masses of dark brown hair, which warmed into red tints under the sunlight.

Across the room from her daughters and niece, enjoying the girls' happiness, sat Mrs. Wyndham, rocking slowly. She was a frail creature, sweet and gentle, still clad in the mourning she had worn for her husband for seven years; one felt that she had been properly placed in luxury, fortunately shielded from hardship. The Wyndhams were wealthy, and the beautiful morning-room in the house on Murray Hill was full of evidences of taste and the long possession of ample means to gratify it.

Even the samples fluttering under the girls' fingers bore the name of a French artist on Fifth Avenue, whose skill only the highly favored could command, and the consultation under way was for the selection for each young girl of gowns fit for a princess's wearing, yet intended for the use of maidens not yet "out," in the hops at the hotel at Bar Harbor in the coming summer.

"I'm afraid I'm dreadfully vain," sighed Jessamy, stroking the bits of soap-bubble-tinted gauzes as she laid them together on her knee. "I hope I love exquisite things for their own sake, not because I want them for myself; but I'm not sure my love for them is purely artistic."

"You do want them for yourself, but it's just

as you want only good pictures in your room," said Phyllis, coming up flushed from the pursuit of some errant bits under the table. "You're born royal in taste. Bab and I could get on if we were beggared, but I can't imagine you shabby. Bab would revel in a sunbonnet and driving cows home, and I could be happy in a tenement, if we were together; but you're a princess, and you can't be anything else."

"You're a bad Phyl, whose object in life is to spoil every one by making them perfectly self-satisfied," said Jessamy. "I hope some of the excuses you find for me are true; I'm as luxurious by nature as a cat—I know that. Come to the window; I want to see this old-rose in the sunlight."

Bab stopped swinging her feet, and slipped from the arm of her mother's chair, where she had perched, to follow them. "Don't you abuse cats, nor my sister Jessamy, miss," she said, putting her arms around slender Jessamy and peering over her shoulder at the sample of silk, while she rubbed Jessamy's arm with her chin, like an affectionate dog. "They're two as nice things as I know. Madrina, Mr. Hurd is crossing the street, and he's headed this way."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Mrs. Wyndham, almost fretfully. "I suppose he is coming to urge me again to withdraw our money from the business; he has tormented me all winter to do it. He says it is n't secure; but that's absurd, with Mr. Abbott at the helm, whom your dear father trusted as he did himself! It's all because they won't show the books lately—as though I wanted to see them while Mr. Abbott is managing! I can't see why Mr. Hurd is so nervous and suspicious! Mr. Abbott came expressly to see me, and explained how bad it would be for the corporation if I offered my stock in the market. I understand him much better than Mr. Hurd; he is more patient, and won't leave a point until he has made me see it as he does. I am no business woman, and I can't understand these things very well at best. You stay in the room to-day, children, and see if you understand. Mr. Hurd insists that I am risking beggaring you, and that distresses me unspeakably."

"Don't mind Mr. Hurd, madrina; he's an Anxious Attorney," said Barbara, with an air of

lucidity, as Violet, the black maid, announced the lawyer, who followed at once on the announcement.

"We are pluming, or more properly donning, our feathers for flight, Mr. Hurd," said Mrs. Wyndham, rising, and pointing to the samples on the couch, as she extended her hand.

"Yes, yes!" said the little man, shaking hands with Mrs. Wyndham without looking at her. "Good morning, Miss Jessamy; good morning, Phyllis; how do you do, little Barbara? May I interrupt your — gracious powers, dear madam, I mean I *must* interrupt your plans, Mrs. Wyndham!"

Jessamy and Phyllis clutched each other with sudden pallor. The little lawyer's voice shook with emotion. Bab flushed, and ran to her mother, putting her arms around her frail figure as though to place herself as a bulwark between her and ill.

"You will not interrupt anything more important than the selection of dancing-gowns for the children," said Mrs. Wyndham, with her soft dignity, though she turned a little paler. "Is there any special reason for your visit,— kind visit always,— Mr. Hurd? And may the girls hear what you have to say, since their interests are at stake?"

"Special reason, madam? Special reason, indeed! Heaven help me, I don't know how to say what must be said, but I prefer the young ladies to hear it," groaned their old friend.

"Evidently you feel that you have something unpleasant to tell me, Mr. Hurd, but I feel sure you magnify it; you know you are always more timid and pessimistic than I," said Mrs. Wyndham, dropping into the nearest chair and trying to smile.

"Mrs. Wyndham, my dear lady, it is n't a matter for self-gratulation! If I could have made you listen to me six — even two months ago, I should not be here to-day, the bearer of this dreadful news," burst out the lawyer, impatiently.

"Would n't it be better to tell us quickly, Mr. Hurd? You frighten us with hints," said Jessamy, in her silvery, even voice, but the poor child's lips were white.

Mr. Hurd glanced at her. "Yes," he said, "but it is not easy. I heard the definite news

last night in Wall Street; rumors have been afloat for days. I wanted to give you one more night of untroubled sleep. It will be in the evening papers."

"What will, Mr. Hurd?" burst out Barbara, impatiently.

"The failure of the Wyndham Iron Company."

There was dead silence in the room, broken only by the low-toned French clock striking ten times.

"The company — failed?" whispered Mrs. Wyndham, trying to find her voice.

"What does that mean, Mr. Hurd?" asked Phyllis.

"It means that your mother's bonds and stocks are valueless, and as she holds everything in her own right, and has kept all that your father left in the business, it means that your inheritance has been wiped out of existence," said the lawyer, not discriminating between daughters and niece in his excitement.

"How can the company have failed? I don't believe it!" cried Mrs. Wyndham, starting to her feet with sudden strength.

"Dear Mrs. Wyndham, it is too certain," said her husband's old friend and attorney, gently. "When they refused to open up the books for inspection I knew this would come."

"Mr. Abbott —" began Mrs. Wyndham.

"Mr. Abbott is an outrageous villain," interrupted Mr. Hurd, passionately. "He has got control of the business, and ruined it by running it on a speculative basis — though justice to his business capacity compels me to add that he has secured himself against harm. Henry Wyndham was completely deceived in him."

"I never knew any one ruined outside of books," said Jessamy, trying to smile. "What does it mean? Going to live in an East Side tenement and working in a sweat-shop?"

"Nonsense, Jessamy!" said her mother, sharply, drying the tears which had been softly falling, while Bab wailed aloud at the picture. "Nonsense! I shall sell some stock, and I am sure we shall get on very well, perhaps economizing somewhat."

"Dear madam, you no more grasp the situation than you saw it coming," said Mr. Hurd, struggling between annoyance and pity. "The

value of your stock is wiped out; practically, you have no stock. Still, I hope matters will not be as bad as Miss Jessamy pictures. This house will rent or sell for enough to give you six or eight thousand a year, and if you sell the pictures and furniture you will have a very respectable principal to live upon; bad as the case is, it might be far worse."

"Do you mean that this house will be the sole—actually the sole—source of income?" gasped Mrs. Wyndham, with more agitation than she had yet shown.

Mr. Hurd nodded.

The poor lady uttered a sharp cry, and fell back, sobbing wildly. "Then I have nothing, nothing!" she screamed. "My darlings are beggared."

Phyllis rang for Violet, and Mr. Hurd leaped to his feet, apprehending the truth. "What do you mean, Mrs. Wyndham?" he demanded.

Mrs. Wyndham rested her head on Phyllis's arm. "Last March," she said feebly, "Mr. Abbott came to me, telling me that the business was temporarily embarrassed, and asked me to let him negotiate a loan with this house as security."

Mr. Hurd, who had been pacing the floor furiously, stopped short with a fervent imprecation. Halting before the feeble creature who had been so duped, he thrust his hands deep in his pockets and gazed down at her. "And you did it?" he growled.

Mrs. Wyndham bowed her head lower, and just then Violet came back with Jessamy, who had gone to seek her, and, with her black face gray from sympathy and fright, put her strong arms around her mistress's fragile body, lifting her like a baby.

"Come right along, you po' little lamb-lady," she said. "Miss Jes'my done telephone for de doctah, an' I 's goin' make you comf'able in bed. Don' you cry 'nothah teah; Vi'let ain't goin' let nothin' come neah you."

Utterly prostrated in mind and body, Mrs. Wyndham found comfort in the soft voice and loving arms. She drooped her head on the tall girl's pink gingham shoulder, and let herself be carried to her chamber as if she had been a child.

Jessamy turned to Mr. Hurd. "You will not mind if we received the news rather badly?"

she said. "We all shall play our parts when we have learned them. It—it—came rather suddenly, you see." Evidently Jessamy was going to be the princess her cousin called her, and meet misfortune proudly.

"You dear child!" said the lawyer, his eyes dimming as he looked in the lovely face, blanched white, and noted the lines holding the soft lips grimly set to keep them from quivering. "You and Phyllis are little heroines. Don't try to be too brave; it is better to cry, and then wipe away the tears to see what is to be done after the shipwreck."

"What are we likely to have to live on if we sell our things?" asked Jessamy, trying to thank him with a smile.

"No one can say positively; it is guesswork. But your father knew good pictures, and I should say you might have an income of two thousand a year out of the net result of the sale. We won't go into that this morning. Good-by, my dears. Try not to worry. No one knows what is best for him in this curious world. People are usually better and stronger for trying their mettle, as well as their muscle. God bless you!" Jessamy did not attempt to answer. Mr. Hurd laid his hand gently on each head, and went away.

Left to themselves, Jessamy and Phyllis looked at each other and around the pretty room still strewn with the samples of their dancing-gowns. With a sudden rush of memory they saw themselves little children playing around the kind father—father to both equally—who had given them this home, and with equal clearness saw the years stretching out before them in which this home would have no being. The necessity for self-restraint was removed; with a common impulse they threw themselves in each other's arms, and burst into passionate weeping.

Bab stirred uneasily on the floor where she had lain sobbing, dried her eyes, and said:

"Don't cry like that, girls; please don't. It does n't matter when I cry; I always go off one way or the other: but I can't stand you being wretched."

She gathered herself up and went over to the other two, who, having controlled themselves while she cried, could not raise their heads.

Bab was mercurial; she had wept her first horror away, and now the necessity of her nature to look on the bright side asserted itself.

"I think likely two thousand a year is a lot when you are used to it," she said. "I expect to learn to manage so well that we can adopt twins on the money left over from our expenses. I'll get points from Ruth Wells; she has learned contriving. Look up; smile. 'Rise, Sally, rise; dry your weeping eyes!'"

"Don't, Bab; you have n't an idea of what has happened," said Jessamy, faintly, but at the same time she raised her head, checking her tears a little.

Bab saw it with secret triumph. "Don't I! I've as much experience as you, miss, anyway. Still, I'm willing to confess I'd rather not be poor," she said, with the air of making a generous concession. "But we'll be happy yet! It is rather hard to be thrown off your high wall, where you've sat all your life. Poor Humpty-Dumpty! I never properly felt for him before!"

And Bab was rewarded for her nonsense by a tearful smile from Jessamy and Phyllis.

## CHAPTER II.

### FRIENDS, COUNSELORS, AND PLANS.

THE evening turned cool and damp, with the unreliability of May. Mrs. Wyndham, too ill to rise, slept, under sedatives, the sleep of utter exhaustion. The girls had taken refuge around the grate fire in Jessamy's beautiful room, with its fine pictures, and background of moss greens and browns. They were profoundly depressed, for on taking account of their stock of accomplishments they found that, though they were talented, they were untrained to practical labor, and that Jessamy's drawing, Bab's music, Phyllis's clever stories and verses, were all too amateurish to find a place in the marts.

"I suppose there is n't much good in making plans," said Jessamy, gazing gloomily into the fire. "I think we should live quite poorly for a while, within our income, whatever it is, and fit ourselves to do something well. I don't want to rush into any kind of half-good employment, when by self-denial, hardship perhaps, at first, we might amount to something in the end."

"Hail, Minerva!" cried Phyllis. "You'll

be as thoroughbred a working-girl, if you must, as you were fine lady, and that's what I love you for, Jasmine-blossom."

"My poor unfortunate children, are you sitting here in the dark?" cried a voice. "I saw that dreadful item in the 'Post'; is it true?"

"How do you do, Aunt Henrietta?" said Jessamy, rising, while Bab barely stifled a groan.

"About the failure? Yes, I'm afraid it's quite true."

Mrs. Hewlett was Mr. Wyndham's aunt; he had been her favorite nephew because he bore her name. Her grand-nieces did not love her. She had a strong tendency to speak her opinions, provided they were unpleasant to the hearer, for she prided herself on her sincerity and infallibility of judgment. Jessamy, Phyllis, and Bab recognized in her coming an added hardship at the end of their hard day.

"I always knew it would end this way," said Aunt Henrietta, dropping into an easy-chair and letting her cloak slip to the floor. "Your mother has no sort of business ability. Poor Henry!"

"Mama did not ruin the Iron Company, aunt, and papa can't need pity now as much as she does," said Bab, losing her temper instantly, as she always did on encountering her whom she disrespectfully called "the drum-major."

"How are you left?" demanded Aunt Henrietta, ignoring Bab, to Jessamy's profound gratitude.

"We shall have only what the contents of this house will bring," said Jessamy. "We hope it may be two thousand a year."

Aunt Henrietta held up both hands in genuine horror, crying: "Two thousand for such a family as you are! It is practically beggary. You have been brought up in the most extravagant way—never taught the value of money. Your mother spoiled you from the cradle. I suppose you will run through what little ready money you have, and then expect to be helped by your friends."

"Really, Aunt Henrietta, I can't see why you assume us entirely to lack common sense, principles, and pride," said Jessamy, struggling to keep her voice steady. "We were just resolving to make our income suffice, investing our little capital in some safe way."

"H'm! Two thousand suffice! You're exactly like your mother — absolutely impractical. If poor Henry —" began Mrs. Hewlett.

"Now, Aunt Henrietta, just drop mama, if you please," interrupted Barbara, hotly. "She is the dearest mother in the world, and you know how papa loved her. I don't see what pleasure there can be in trying to blame some one for this trouble, but if any one is to blame it was dear papa himself, not mama, for he left her all his wealth, all his trust in Mr. Abbott, and never taught her one thing about business. Mama never said nor did an unkind thing in all her gentle life, and I won't have her abused. In spite of all that you say, you were very proud of her lovely face and manners always, and glad enough to

point her out as your niece. You've boasted of us while we were rich, and now you talk as if this trouble was a punishment for our sins, especially mama's. And I won't let you mention her! — dear, crushed mama! — lying in there heartbroken for our sakes!"

Bab's cheeks had been getting redder, her voice higher, through this outburst, until at this point she burst into tempestuous tears.

"Highty-tighty, miss! Don't be imperti-

nent," said the old lady, after a pause. "You'll be dependent on your friends' charity in six months, and you will be wise not to offend them."

"I won't! I'll beg from door to door, or be a cash-girl first," Bab sobbed out. "Besides, I'm not impertinent; I'm only firm."

The idea of Bab firm, on the verge of hysterics, made Jessamy and Phyllis smile faintly.

"Better not say any more, Bab," Phyllis whispered, as she stroked the hot cheek, while Jessamy said: "You must not mind Bab, aunt. We all are more or less overwrought. But I agree with her that, if you please, we will leave our mother out of the discussion."

"I don't mind that very flighty child; she never had a particle of stability, and

she has had no training," said Aunt Henrietta, with what in a less dignified person would have been a sniff. "What work will you take up? For of course it is ridiculous to talk of living on two thousand a year; you must go to work."

"We have not decided anything yet, aunt; we've had only a few hours to get used to being poor," replied Phyllis.

"I've been considering your case as I drove over, and I believe there's nothing you can do



AUNT HENRIETTA.



decently. Your education is the thistle-down veneer girls get nowadays," said their aunt, disregarding the fact that she would have been no better armed to meet misfortune at their age.

"Veneer!" echoed Jessamy. "I hope not, though I don't know what thistle-down veneer is. I would n't mind being honest white pine, but I should despise the best veneer."

"I am sure you are only fit for nursery governesses. I have a place which Phyllis can take, to teach French to some girls of her own age. The mother applied to me for a teacher. They are new-rich, but that is the one thing Phyllis can do. I shall not be able to help you further," said Aunt Henrietta.

"We shall not need help," said Jessamy, her head up like a young racer. "Will you excuse us from more of this sort of talk, aunt? We have had a hard day."

Mrs. Hewlett rose; her eldest niece overawed her in spite of her determination not to mind what she called "Jessamy's affected airs."

"I felt sure I should not find you chastened by misfortune," she said. "You should take your downfall in a more Christian spirit. I trust you will heed me in one point at least. Sell your best clothes and ornaments. It will be most unbecoming if, in your altered circumstances, you dress as you did when you were Henry Wyndham's daughters. People will make the most unkind comments if you do."

Barbara had recovered by this time. "Are n't we still Henry Wyndham's daughters, aunt?" she asked guilelessly. "I did n't realize parentage as well as inheritance was vested in the business. What a calamity it failed! As to unkind remarks, no mere acquaintance will make them; all but our relatives will understand that we could afford fine things when we had them, and that failure did not destroy them."

"Bab, how can you?" said Jessamy, reproachfully, as Mrs. Hewlett disappeared. "There is no use in making her worse than she is."

"I could n't, Lady Jessamy; nature is perfect in her works," said Bab, airily, holding out her hand for a letter Violet offered her.

It was a note from a lifelong friend of her mother's, so loving, so considerate, so gener-

ously delicate in its offer of help that no better antidote to their great-aunt's trying peculiarities could have come to the poor girls, whose wounds were smarting as if salt had been dropped on them from Mrs. Hewlett's remarks.

"Dear, lovely, blessed Mrs. Van Alyn!" cried all three girls, sobbing on one another's shoulders after they had read the warm message; but this time their tears were of the sort which do good, and sent them to bed refreshed and comforted.

In the morning Bab started off early to carry out her plan of consulting Ruth Wells. Ruth was a brisk little creature of Bab's own age, who had been the Wyndhams' schoolmate for a short time, but who, meeting with misfortune also, had dropped almost entirely out of their lives; only Bab, refusing to let her go, kept up a much interrupted friendship with her.

Ruth lived with her mother in a little flat — apartment is too dignified a word — not far from the Morningside, Heights. She was skilful with her needle, and earned by embroidering enough to supplement sufficiently for their needs an income hardly large enough to pay their low rent. Bab had always wondered that she was so happy. To-day she resolved, if possible, to solve the secret of her content.

As she pressed the button under the speaking-tube over which the name "Wells" shone on a narrow strip of brass, the latch of the front door clicked, and pushing it open, Barbara mounted the three flights of stairs.

Ruth herself opened the door at their head, and uttered an exclamation of surprise and pleasure at the sight of Bab.

"Oh, Babbie dear, does it affect you?" she cried at once. "I saw an account of the Wyndham Iron Works' failure in this morning's 'Times.'"

"It affects us so much, Ruth, that I came here to get your advice. You've had experience in coming down in the world. And I want to say," Bab went on, with heightened color, "that I wish we all had been here oftener. We never realized how lonely you must have been at first." And Bab looked around the little parlor with new interest.

"Oh, I was so much younger than we are now when our troubles came that they were

easier to bear," said Ruth, brightly. "You've always been a good friend, Bab. People who are poor are too busy to see much of those who have all their time on their hands. It is n't possible to be intimate with people who live very differently from ourselves. But do tell me, is it as bad a failure as the paper had it?" While Ruth had talked she had gotten off Bab's outer garments, and now seated herself at her embroidery-frame, while Bab drew a chair in front of it, and shook her head.

"Quite as bad; worse, in fact," she said, and proceeded to tell Ruth the whole story. "Now, what I want to know is whether four persons can possibly live on two thousand a year — supposing we have that — until we learn to be useful?" she asked in conclusion.

"Of course," said Ruth, with cheerful decision. She did not seem to think the case very bad. Taking a pencil and paper from the table, she began to reckon.

"Do you think you could do your own work in a little flat?" she asked.

"Mercy, no!" cried Bab, in horror. "Why, we'd starve! We can't do anything. We must board."

"That's a pity, for cheap boarding is unwholesome, vulgar, and generally horrid," said Ruth. "However, if you must, you must. It won't last. Mama and I began that way, but we soon learned better. You can get two rooms, maybe, for seven dollars apiece — twenty-eight dollars a week. That's — fifty-two times — fourteen hundred and fifty-six dollars a year. That leaves five hundred for washing, clothing, possible doctor's bill, and so on."

"Can we live for that?" asked Bab, awed by Ruth's businesslike methods.

"It will be bad, but you would be foolish to spend more. Your mother is delicate, and you will have to get her dainties, no matter how you board. We ran too close to our margin once. I never forgot the lesson," said Ruth.

"You've helped me a lot, Ruth," said Bab, rising to go. "I should n't mind being poor if I could be like you."

"Well, I believe I've a talent for poverty. It has a good side," laughed Ruth. "I'm happy because I'm so busy I've no time to imagine troubles. I can't even stop to realize I don't

feel well; so if that happens I hardly know it. I just work ahead and drive the headache off. You don't know how good it is for girls to have lots that must be done. Come see our flat," added brave Ruth, leading the way. "This is mama's room; the next one is mine. Here's the bath-room; you see, it is large, for a flat! And is n't this a nice little sunny dining-room? Here's the kitchen. Mama, this is Barbara Wyndham."

Mrs. Wells was bending over a double boiler on the gas-range. She looked sweet and well bred in her black gown, with a white apron shielding it, and held out a delicate hand to Bab, with no apology for her employment.

Bab looked at the rooms with newly perceptive eyes. Everything was of the plainest, yet so refined and dainty it could but be pretty. She began to suspect there were many things in life to learn which would prove pleasant knowledge. But she wondered, coming from the spacious Murray Hill rooms, how Ruth and her mother managed to move about in these without seriously damaging their anatomy. Ruth was so proud of it all, however, so unconscious of defects in her home, that Bab could envy her, though it was a meager box of a place, and Ruth worked hard to maintain it.

"Thank you again, Ruth," she said, as her friend hugged her at the head of the stairs, letting the pity she dared not express show in the warmth of her embrace and the tears in her eyes as she kissed her. "I'm coming often, please, for advice and courage. You've shown me already I need not fear. I suspect our first additional revenue will come from the sale of my great work, 'How to be Happy though Beggared.'"

### CHAPTER III.

#### WAYS AND MEANS.

EVENTS moved swiftly for the Wyndhams, impelled by the force of necessity. Mr. Wyndham had been widely known for the value of his art treasures, and collectors came from distant cities to bid for them as they hung on the walls. Everything else was to be sold by auction, and Mrs. Van Alyn, the kind friend whose loving letter had comforted the girls,

persuaded Mrs. Wyndham to come to her for the final two weeks of her nominal ownership of the house. It would be less painful for the poor lady to pass its threshold for the last time, shutting the door on everything as she had loved it, than to remain through the dismal dis-

mantling  
process.



"A YOUNG MAN DASHED DOWN THE STEPS INTO THE RUINS."

Accordingly, one warm sunny morning Mrs. Van Alyn's rotund horses drew up at the door, and Mrs. Wyndham, looking very frail, and newly widowed under her long veil, came

slowly down the stairs, leaning on Jessamy's arm, and forth upon the door-steps, where for the last time the mahogany door swung close, shutting out the mistress of the house forever. Mrs. Van Alyn helped the three girls through the dreadful days of the sale, at the end of which they found themselves homeless, but with their expectation of the result of the sale realized. They had, with a little personal legacy left them by a sister of Mrs. Hewlett, thirty thousand dollars residuum of their former wealth, which, invested by Mr. Hurd, would yield them an income of two thousand a year.

The first step to be made by these novices in the ungentle art of living was to find a boarding-place, and in this they were aided by Ruth, whose experience had taught what to seek and what to avoid. The limitations of their purse defined the boundaries of their search; only places where low prices obtained were open to the Wyndhams, a fact difficult to master at first, and the poor little pilgrims up Poverty Hill shrank from the mere exterior of some of the houses in their list of advertisements cut from the papers. They climbed long flights of stairs, to see repeated dingy rooms carpeted in flowery tapestry carpets, with oak or expressionless marble-topped black-walnut furniture — those furnished in mahogany or maple were beyond the Wyndhams' range of price. These days of search taught the

girls more of life than their entire years had yet shown them, and the fruit of the tree of knowledge was bitter indeed.

"I tell you, you would be far better off in

your own little flat, cooking your own little dinner, on your own little gas-range, in your own little spider. However, don't lose heart; there are degrees of badness," laughed Ruth, as they despondently quitted an uncommonly discouraging specimen of the typical boarding-house, impregnated with odors of the dinners of "Christmases past."

At last they found a place, in one of the "Thirty" streets, where there were two rooms adjoining, though not connected, on the very topmost floor, which they could get at their price in consideration of the fact that they were heated only by stoves, and they would be expected to look after their own fires. They were sunny, and, though plainly furnished, less ugly than others the girls had seen, and they took them, since they could do no better, proceeding to make the best of what each felt in her heart was a very bad bargain, with the courage each possessed in different forms.

There were two days intervening between engaging and taking possession of the new boarding-place, and Bab assumed the task of beautifying their unattractive quarters before her mother should see them. She would not permit any of the others to look at her improvements, but hammered her thumbs and strained her unaccustomed arms putting up curtains, shelves, casts, and photographs alone, in order, she said, "to usher her family into a bower of bliss" when it moved in.

On the afternoon before this event Barbara came down Thirty—Street from Sixth Avenue. Her arms were full of flower-pots,—two filled them,—and a boy followed with a basket containing six more. Bab had not been able to resist the temptation to invest in plants for her mother's window to make the room a little more cheerful.

She hurried down the street, and paused at the foot of the steps long enough to let her listless squire catch up with her. She had no hand for her skirt, but she sprang up the steps, regardless of tripping; and at that instant the door opened, and a cocker-spaniel rushed out, barking wildly, and throwing himself downward with that utter disregard of whether head or tail went first, and of anything which might be in his path, characteristic of a young and blissful little dog.

VOL. XXIX.—28.

He flung himself down. Barbara stepped aside; her balance was uncertain and her skirts unmanageable by reason of her laden arms; she tripped—fell. Flower-pots, dog, and girl rolled crashing, and scattering dirt in all directions, into the boy and basket two steps lower, ending in a tangle on the sidewalk.

From the doorway a horrified voice cried: "Good heavens, 'Nixie'!" and a young man dashed down the steps into the ruins.

"Are you hurt?" he cried anxiously, as he fished Barbara out of the wreck. Nixie had already slunk out from under, and was wagging his tail deprecatingly, with glances at his master of mingled shame and amazement.

"I think I am," said Barbara, raising her head and trying to state the fact cheerfully.

The young man replaced her hat,—it had fallen over her eyes,—and revealed a woe-begone little face. Earth plastered the saucy chin; one cheek was cut; blood trickled from the bridge of the poor little tilted nose, making a paste wherever the loam from the flower-pots had splattered, and this was nearly everywhere. Barbara's hair was coming down, her hat was shapeless, and her eyes tearful from the smarting wounds.

"By Jove! you're a wreck! It's a shame!" cried the young man. "I'll whip Nixie."

"You'll do nothing of the sort," said Barbara, with spirit. "How did he know I was coming up—coming up like a flower—at that moment? You might as well whip me! Nobody is to blame, and I'll be all right when I've washed, and sewed, and plastered, and done a few other things to myself and my clothing."

"Well, you're plucky," said the youth, admiringly. "I'm a doctor in embryo, full fledged next June. I'll take you in and fix you up. Do you—you don't live here?"

"We shall to-morrow; I'm a new boarder," said Barbara. "Oh, I hope my plants are n't broken! Can they be repotted? We've become poor, and I ought not to have bought them. Why on earth does n't that boy get up? Is he killed?" she demanded, realizing suddenly that her companion in misery was still lying with his head in the basket, under a debris of flower-pots.

"It's why *in* earth, rather," laughed the

medical student. "Here, you boy, are you alive? You're buried all right! Get up."

The inert boy gathered himself slowly together. "Well, I'll be darned!" he said.

"You'll have to be," cried the doctor, sitting down to laugh, and pointing to the rent across the shoulders of the listless youngster's jacket.

"What ailed that dog? Did he have a fit?" drawled the boy, scowling at Nixie, who slunk behind Barbara self-consciously.

"He was n't a dog; he was a cat—apult," shouted the doctor, rocking to and fro, laughing.

"Oh, please help me into the house!" cried Barbara, half laughing, half crying. Several people had paused to gaze, grinning sympathetically at the scene.

"Oh, I beg your pardon! What an idiot to keep you standing here!" cried the medical student, jumping up. "Here, hustle these plants into your basket," he added to the boy. "They're not broken; we can fix them up all right. Where's my key? There you are! Walk in. Get into the house, Nixie, you crazy pup; you've lost your walk. Leave those plants in the hall, boy, and rush back to your shop and tell your employer you want as many pots as you started out with, and a bag of loam; hurry back with them. Now, Mrs. Black—Mrs. Black, where are you?"

"Here," said the landlady, emerging from the rear. "Why, Miss Wyndham, what has happened?"

"Introduce us, please; we met on the steps," said Barbara's new acquaintance.

"Miss Wyndham, Dr. Leighton," said the bewildered Mrs. Black, automatically.

"Happy to have the honor, Miss Wyndham. There was a mix-up on the steps; there's some of it there yet. Let me have some warm water and a sponge, please. Miss Wyndham, take off your hat and have your face washed," said the unabashed boy.

"Not by you," said Barbara.

"Precisely. I'm almost a doctor, and I'm going to see that no dirt is left in your wounds to scar you. Don't be foolish, Miss Wyndham; it's not precisely a ceremonious occasion."

Barbara submitted with no further demur;

and soon her face was adorned with court-plaster laid on in a plaid pattern.

"Shall I be scarred?" she asked, surveying anxiously the crisscross lines on the bridge of her nose.

"Not a bit," said Dr. Leighton, cheerfully. "Mrs. Black might give you a cup of tea, to brace you up."

"Yes," said Mrs. Black, without enthusiasm.

"No, thanks; I hate tea, and I'll be all right. There's the boy with the new pots," said Barbara.

"Let me help you to get the plants potted, and I'll settle with the boy—because it's all Nixie's fault," said the young doctor. "Not a word; get to work, Miss Wyndham."

He placed papers on the floor in the rear hall, apparently oblivious to Mrs. Black's icy disapproval, which inexperienced Barbara found oppressive.

"My father and your father were friends," said the young fellow, packing the earth around a begonia. "I knew you were coming here to board, and I know about the hard blow you've had. It's a shame, and it's all the fault of that scoundrel Abbott."

"Oh, how nice that your father knew papa! That is almost like our being friends," said Barbara, simply. "Yes, it's dreadful for mama to be poor, and for Jessamy. Phyl and I are not going to mind it so much."

"Is Phil your brother?"

"No; Phyllis, it is; she's my cousin, only she's just as much my sister as Jessamy, for she has always lived with us. I'm a year younger than they are. Jessamy's perfectly beautiful, and princessed, and Phyllis is the most unselfish blessing in the world. I'm only Barbara."

"And I'm only Tom; I'm not a doctor yet. It's awfully jolly, your coming here. Mrs. Black gone? Yes. There is n't any one in the house I care to know; the young people are n't my sort. I hope you'll forgive Nixie and me enough to speak to us once in a while," said Tom, getting up and dusting his knees.

"Oh, we shall want to talk to you; Nixie is such a nice dog," laughed Bab.

"Only Nixie? Well, love my dog, love—oh, it's the other way about. Never mind,



though; we can improve old saws. Where are your rooms?"

"First floor from the Milky Way," laughed Barbara. "We hate to have madrina climb so far, but we could n't afford better rooms."

Tom Leighton looked down on the swollen, patched little face with brotherly kindness; respect and pity were in his voice as he said gently: "You will make any room bright and homelike. I see why you took your tumble down the steps so well; you are brave in falling, Miss Barbara."

Barbara stooped suddenly to pat Nixie, hiding her wounded face in his glossy curls. "I'm not always brave," she said huskily. "I am ashamed to think so much about my beautiful room, and home. I feel so little, and so lost, in this boarding-house."

"Poor little woman!" said Tom Leighton. "Try to feel you have one friend in it. I have two sisters, and it was lonely for me when I left home. Good-by, now; we shall meet tomorrow."

They shook hands, feeling like old friends, and Nixie sat up to shake hands too, though the dignity of his farewell was much impaired by a surreptitious lick of his quick red tongue on Bab's chin.

Tom departed, whistling, to give Nixie his postponed walk. He found himself seeing a tilted nose adorned with court-plaster, and brown eyes, wistful like Nixie's, all down the street. "She's plucky, simple, and frank; just the girl to be a fellow's good chum," he thought. "What luck they're coming to the Blackboard!"—Tom's name for his residence.

Bab finished her tasks, and returned to Mrs. Van Alyn's with glowing accounts of the jolly boy who had patched her up, and of the little dog who had undone her.

"There are two nice things in our new home," she said, "and I believe we'll be happy in spite of fate."

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### MAKING THE BEST OF IT.

"I DON'T know where to put another thing," said Mrs. Wyndham, pushing aside a hat-box to get room to sit on the rocking-chair, and casting a despairing glance from the shallow

closet, already full, to the floor, scattered with the heterogeneous contents of two trunks, in the midst of which Barbara was sitting.

A scream from the next room prevented Bab replying to her mother, and Nixie bounded through the open door, triumphantly worrying a slipper. He recognized Barbara, and dropping his prize, made a leap toward the pretty face he had been the means of damaging before she, from her disadvantage-point on the floor, could stop him.

Tom Leighton appeared immediately, calling Nixie, with no result, for Bab had her arms around the wriggling black bit of enthusiasm, hugging him.

"Mama, this is the doctor who repaired me so nicely; Dr. Leighton, my mother," said Barbara.

"Please don't think me intrusive, Mrs. Wyndham," said Tom, stepping forward to take the delicate hand extended to him. "I am the son of John Leighton, a friend of your husband, and I wanted to ask if I could be of use in getting you in order. I'm a jack-of-all-trades who has boarded long enough to have learned dodges."

"I remember your father," said Mrs. Wyndham, cordially. "It is very pleasant to find a friend among strangers. I don't see what you can do, unless you build a closet. This tiny cubby Bab and I must share is already overflowing, yet just look!" And Mrs. Wyndham made a comprehensive gesture toward the littered floor.

"I suppose we've too many clothes, but we don't dare give away one thing. We may never be able to buy any more, and we're going to get patent patterns, and make over this stock until we're old and gray. I expect that to be soon, however, if I have to sew," said Bab, scrambling to her feet and tossing up Nixie's purloined slipper for him to catch.

"A dog broke and entered—entered anyway—and stole Jessamy's slipper—oh, I beg pardon," said Phyllis, stopping short in the doorway at the unexpected apparition of Tom.

"My niece, Miss Phyllis Wyndham. And my elder daughter, Jessamy, Dr. Leighton," added Mrs. Wyndham, as Jessamy followed Phyllis.

"I came to ask if you had any idea what Jessamy and I could do with our clothes,

aunt," said Phyllis. "We have n't begun to make an impression on the room, yet the closet and bureau are full."

"Not I; Bab and I are in the same plight," said Mrs. Wyndham. "How do people manage in such narrow space!"

"You'll have to have a wigwam," said Tom.

"A wigwam! That would have no closets at all; and, besides, where could we build it in New York?" laughed Phyllis.

"In that corner. I'll make it," said Tom. "It's a corner shelf, with hooks in the under side and a curtain around it. Then you want a divan—a woven-wire cot-bed with the legs cut off, fastened by hinges to a box. We could upholster it ourselves. You would be surprised to see what it would hold. Then, if one of you were ill, it would be useful as a couch."

"There spoke the doctor," said Jessamy. "I suppose we shall have to have a trunk in each room besides," she added ruefully.

"Why not put that flat-topped trunk in the window, case it in with boards, cover it with felt, and use it as a book-stand?" suggested Tom.

"Well, you *are* a genius!" cried Bab, in open admiration, while Phyllis sang softly under her breath, to the tune of "St. Patrick's Day in the Morning":

"All hail to the doctor who seems to be able  
To mend up a nose or to make up a table!  
We gladly would cheer him, but that it seems risky,  
For cheers in a boarding-house might be too frisky."

"Well, I never!" laughed Tom. "Say, was that—of course it had to be improvised?"

"Oh, Phyl is a genius," said Jessamy, proudly. "One of these days her name will be in all the magazines, and at last in the encyclopedia."

"And likely in oblivion," added Phyl, while at that instant a cheery voice cried, "First aid to the injured!" and Ruth Wells "burst into the gloom like an arc-light," Barbara said, jumping up to hug her rapturously.

"No, don't; I've tacks and a hammer here," said Ruth, struggling free. "I knew you had no closets, or none worth calling one, so I came down to show you how to make a charity."

"A what?" asked Jessamy.

"A charity; it covers a multitude of things,

you see," laughed Ruth. "You take a board,—we can get one downstairs probably,—saw it to the right length, and nail it in a corner. Then you screw hooks—"

"In the under side; we know," Phyllis interrupted. "Only Dr. Leighton says it's a 'wigwam.' This is Dr. Leighton, and Nixie—Miss Ruth Wells," she added.

In five minutes the little room was ringing with fun. The "charitable wigwam"—Phyllis's compromise on its name—could not be made at once, for lack of boards; but the young people managed to cover up their dismal first impressions of the bleak side of life, and this was making a real "charity," as Jessamy pointed out in bidding Ruth good night.

The wigwam was made, in the end, the divan too, and the Wyndhams began to learn to adjust themselves to the new conditions. Tom had become almost one of themselves, Nixie a necessity and no longer a luxury, as Bab noted. Tom was such a bright, honest, boyish creature that no greater piece of good fortune could well have befallen the girls in their trouble than his friendship, a fact their mother recognized gratefully. As to Tom himself, the motherly kindness of Mrs. Wyndham, the sweet, frank companionship of the girls, were to the young fellow who had loved his own mother and sisters well a boon which he could hardly enjoy enough.

Winter was coming on, and, for the first time in their lives, the Wyndhams were obliged to try to make old answer for new in the matter of garments.

"Not a penny must be spent this season," declared Jessamy, sternly. "A year hence we may earn new clothes."

All the summer garments were laid away in the new divan. "Never throw away a winter thing in the spring, nor a summer thing in the fall," advised Ruth, that little woman wise in ways and means. "You can't tell how anything looks out of its season, nor what you may want. Set up a scrap-box, and tuck everything into it; it's ten to one you'll be grateful for the very thing you thought least hopeful. Many a time I've all but hugged an old faded ribbon because its one bright part was found to be just the right shade and length to line a collar."

The scrap-box, therefore, was established, and easily filled from a stock not yet depleted. Jessamy's artistic talents developed in the direction of hats. Ruth taught her to take the long wrists of light suède gloves which were past wearing and stretch them over a frame for the crowns of especially pretty hats.

Jessamy made a hat apiece, with crowns of glove-wrists and rims of puffed velvet, trimmed with feathers and bows from the new scrap-box; each was different, yet each a "James Dandy," according to Tom's authoritative verdict.

Dressmaking was a more serious matter, but the three Wyndhams essayed it with the courage of ignorance. Ruth brought down mysterious paper patterns, "perforated to confuse the innocent," Bab said, and announced that she had come for a dress-parade. Her friends were still too unversed in being poor to realize that when she came thus Ruth was sacrificing her own good to theirs, since her time meant money, and little Ruth's pockets jingled only when she spent long days at her needle.

"Get out all last year's glories," commanded Ruth, perched on the foot-board of Jessamy and Phyllis's bed. "That's a pretty dark-blue cloth suit; whose is that?"

"Phyllis's; it was nice, but she tried it on the other day, and it's full in the skirt," said Jessamy.

"I would n't dare touch anything so tailor-made; if we ripped it we could never give it the same finish. But we could take out the gathers and lay a box-plait in the back; that will make it flatter—more in style," cried Ruth, with sudden illumination. "Now is n't it true that there's good blown to some one on all winds? If you had n't stoves in your rooms you would n't have a place to heat irons, and don't I know the impossibility of getting irons from the lower regions when one is boarding?"

"What does 'lower regions' mean? It sounds doubtful," inquired Tom, from the doorway.

"Go away; this is a feminine occasion—no boys allowed," cried Ruth.

"Mysteries of Isis?" suggested Tom. "I only want a buttonhole sewed up; would n't the goddess allow that?"

"Yes," said Phyllis, holding out her hand

for the collar Tom waved appealingly. "It is rather in the line of the service about to begin in this temple. We are going into dress-making."

"You'll succeed; you can do anything," said Tom, watching Phyllis's fingers as she twitched the thread in a scientific manner, drawing the gaping buttonhole together.

"Those laundry people apparently dry collars by hanging them on crowbars thrust through the buttonholes. Could n't I help your dress-making? I know there are bones in waists; maybe I could set them."

The four girls groaned. "Such a pale, feeble little jokelet!" sighed Bab. "Take it to the hospital to be measured for crutches."

"Yes; here's your collar. Run away and play with the other little boys; we're busy. By and by, if you're good, we may let you take out bastings," said Phyllis.

"Jupiter! That sounds familiar," sighed Tom. "My mother used to say just that when I was seven. Much obliged for the collar. When you want me for the bastings, sing out. I'll pardon your impertinence in consideration of service rendered." And Tom disappeared.

"Phyl will do very well with the blue, then," said Ruth, resuming practicalities. "What are your prospects, Other Two?"

"Jessamy's gray with chinchilla is as good as new, but I spilled something on this brown of mine right down the front, and I have n't a smidge of the goods," said Bab, sadly.

"A what?" murmured Ruth, absently, wrinkling her brow over the problem. "I have it!" she cried, slipping to the floor from her perch with a triumphant little shout.

"Eureka, Miss Archimedes! What is it?" asked Phyllis.

"Braid!" cried Ruth. "We'll get the narrowest silk soutache; Jessamy shall draw a design; Bab, you shall braid the entire front breadth of your skirt, resolving at each stitch to be neater in future. And now for house wear," Ruth continued, while Bab made a wry face at the prospect before her.

"I thought perhaps we could make waists out of these skirts; they would be pretty with our cloth skirts," said Phyllis, doubtfully, turning over a heap of bright-colored fancy silks.

"Could! Of course we can; let's rip them now," said Ruth, whipping out her little scissors.

The eight hands made quick work of the ripping, and Ruth cut out three waists by the tissue-paper patterns she had brought, pinned and basted them together, and left her friends to carry out her instructions.

Phyllis proved adept at the new art, Jessamy succeeded fairly, but Bab had a hard time with her waist. Seams puckered and drew askew, because of her reckless way of sewing them up in various widths, and she felt aggrieved when the waist proved one-sided in trying on. As to sleeves, Bab's were bewitched. The poor child basted, tried on, ripped and tried again, refusing all help in her determination to be independent, till her cheeks were purple, and throwing the waist down, she cried forlornly.

Tom surprised her in this tempest, and laughed at her till she longed to flay him. Then, sincerely repentant for having aggravated her woes, he humbly begged her pardon, and took her for a walk with Nixie to calm her ruffled nerves. When she returned Phyllis had disregarded her wishes and basted in the refractory sleeves for her, which, like everything else, had yielded to Phyllis's charm and gone meekly into place.

There was real pleasure to the girls in using their wits for these things; there were compensations in poverty, they found. But the ugly side remained: the jealousy of three girls who wore photograph-buttons, and were the Wyndhams' opposites, at table as well as literally; the landlady's insinuations that she considered the rate of payment from the Wyndhams insufficient to remunerate her for the immense, though to them imperceptible, generosity with which she served them.

And Mrs. Wyndham was ailing, fretting her heart out over the present situation and her poor girls' future. But the most serious aspect of the anxieties closing in around the Wyndhams was that, in spite of all their prudence, money slipped away; laundry bills took on alarming proportions, and they had never dreamed how fast five-cent car-fares could swell into as many dollars. Although they had taken care to make their expenditures come well within their income, they saw that there was not

going to be enough to meet an emergency, should it arise; and Jessamy and Phyllis talked till midnight many a night, discussing how they should put their young shoulders to the wheel and join the great army of wage-earners.

## CHAPTER V.

### PHYLLIS AND BARBARA ENTER THE LISTS.

AUNT HENRIETTA always stayed until November in her cottage near Marblehead. She said that she never enjoyed the ocean until she was alone with it, and Jessamy suggested afterward that it was a trifle hard on the ocean—a severe remark for Jessamy, whose genuinely high standards of good breeding forbade her unkind comments on others, even on Aunt Henrietta when she was most trying.

Immediately on her return to town Mrs. Hewlett came to look up "her fallen kindred," as Barbara said. That young lady went down to the parlor to conduct her great-aunt to her mother. "It would make a lovely title for an improving book for the young, would n't it?" she said, turning from the glass, where she had been inspecting the last faint trace of the mishap to her nose. "'Little Barbara's Upward Leading,' or 'Toward the Skies,' or 'Helped Upward,' or 'Mounting Heavenward,' or even simply 'Uplifted.'"

"Barbara, I am ashamed of you!" said her mother, as severely as she could, while trying not to laugh.

"Now, Bab, do be nice," pleaded Jessamy.

"Nice! I'd like to know what could be nicer than to plan moral little titles like those?" said Bab, in an injured voice. "But don't worry. I'll be a sweet morsel when I get down there."

"You look thinner," said Aunt Henrietta, when Barbara had delicately touched the unresponsive cheek offered her to kiss.

"I am thinner, aunt. We're none of us waxing fleshly. Black Sally's cooking was more comforting than our present fare," said Bab.

"H'm! Where under heavens are your rooms?" demanded Mrs. Hewlett.

"Just there, Aunt Henrietta—right under heavens, on the top floor," laughed Barbara.

"Do you mean to say you've taken your delicate mother up all those flights? You ought to be ashamed of yourselves!" said her great-aunt.

"What could we do, aunt?" asked Barbara, meekly, though her cheeks reddened. "We were not able to make any boarding-house-keeper give us better rooms at our price for mama's sake."

"Do? You ought to be earning money—three great healthy girls, and Phyllis only a niece-in-law of your mother's, besides! I came to talk to you about this," said Mrs. Hewlett.

"Please wait till we get upstairs. I fancy there are always ears about here," said Bab, and led the way to their own quarters.

"Excelsior is our motto, aunt," she said, pausing at the head of the second flight, and finding malicious pleasure in her relative's labored breathing.

"Well, Emily, the consequences of your imprudence are severe. I am sorry to find you thus. You don't look well," was Aunt Henrietta's greeting to Mrs. Wyndham. "Now, I want to get down to business without delay," she added, removing her splendid furs. "You are living wretchedly to keep these girls fine ladies. You always spoiled them, Emily; but your weakness should really have some limit. It is outrageous for you to climb all these stairs that a slender income may support four people. These girls should contribute to you, not be a drain upon you. You can't be poor and be fine ladies all at once."

"We hope that we can be, aunt," said Jessamy, "but you are mistaken if you think we wish to spare ourselves at our mother's expense."

Only Mrs. Wyndham's hand holding Bab's wrist tight kept that small torpedo from exploding. "This question has been discussed among us, aunt," said Mrs. Wyndham, quietly, though her voice trembled. "Jessamy has determined on her course. She has talent, and we think will do good book illustrations. She is going to fit herself for her work. From the first Jessamy has declared that she should prepare herself to do something well."

"Jessamy has sense," said Aunt Henrietta, surveying the girl with something like approbation. "She is so pretty that she will undoubt-

edly marry before she follows any occupation long. I only hope she will remember her necessities, and marry well."

"If you mean by *well* a good man whom she loves and trusts, I hope so too, Aunt Henrietta," said Mrs. Wyndham, with heightened color. "My trouble would be bitter indeed if I thought it would lead one of my girls to marry for wealth or ambition."

"Sentimentality! You were never practical, Emily," said Aunt Henrietta, impatiently; but more pressing interests than merely possible marriage prevented her stopping to quarrel. "How about the other two?"

"I agree with Aunt Henrietta that I, at least, should be earning money," said Phyllis.

"Not you any more than me, Phyl," cried Bab, with more warmth than correctness.

"Well, I cut an advertisement from the morning paper for Barbara to answer," said Aunt Henrietta, producing a clipping. "Answer it now, and I'll post the letter when I go. It would probably be easy employment, and you are too flighty for most things."

"Thanks, Aunt Henrietta," commented Barbara, spearing the slip to the pincushion with a hat-pin. "I'll answer it; not just now, though."

"Oh, fancy my little Bab, my baby, going down to business every day!" cried Mrs. Wyndham.

"There's your foolish pride again, Emily," said Mrs. Hewlett, sternly. "Your daughters are no better than other people's daughters."

"It is not pride," said Mrs. Wyndham, stung to self-defense. "Unwomanly women are a misfortune to themselves and all the community, and it is impossible to knock about the world without losing something of that dear and delicate loveliness which is fast going out of fashion at best. If it can be avoided, I think no girl should be placed in the thick of the fight, striding through the world in fierce competition with men."

"If it can be avoided—precisely; but it cannot be avoided," said Aunt Henrietta, calmly; "for none of your relatives can afford to help you, Emily."

"Help! When did I ever dream of wanting or being willing to accept help, aunt?" cried Mrs. Wyndham, hysterically. "But if I prefer



to practise stern self-denial to keep my girls sheltered until such time as they can help me in more feminine ways than going into business offices, is that wrong?"

"Not wrong," said Aunt Henrietta, with exasperating soothing in her voice, and entire conviction of being right, "but utterly foolish and impractical. Now, I have a proposition for Phyllis. I spoke of it when I first heard you were ruined. An acquaintance of mine is looking for some one to read French with her daughter and three of her young friends. She will pay a girl twenty-five dollars a month for two hours' reading every afternoon. Fortunately, Phyllis's French is perfect, and that is a feminine employment, and so ought to satisfy you, Emily."

Mrs. Wyndham twisted her handkerchief nervously. This was bringing poverty home to her. She clung tenaciously, poor lady, to the hope of sheltering her little brood, and no amount of privation seemed to her like thrusting the burden on them as did their going out into the world to earn their living.

"I'll try it, aunt," said Phyllis.

"That is right," said Mrs. Hewlett, rising, well pleased at finding her grand-nieces so reasonable—"reasonable" meaning, to her mind, as to most others under like circumstances, ready to accept her advice. "I wrote this introductory line on the back of my visiting-card. You will find Mrs. Haines at that number East Forty — Street, just out of Fifth Avenue. You will do well to apply at once."

"You won't mind if Phyllis mentions that she is your niece in applying?" inquired Jessamy, with intent hidden under her gentle manner.

But satire was lost on Aunt Henrietta. "Not at all; you are only my grand-nieces, and nothing of the sort could affect my social position," she said. Then she went away, leaving a perturbed roomful behind her.

"Now, let me tell you, my dearest aunty-mother, that I'm glad to read the French," said Phyllis. "Twenty-five dollars a month will nearly pay my board, and I'd be happier to feel I were helping. It won't be the end of my career, I hope, but it will answer for a beginning. I honestly think our metallic great-

aunt is right—that we ought to be bettering matters, rather than settle down satisfied to such a life as this."

Mrs. Wyndham was crying softly. "To think that if I had heeded Mr. Hurd we should have enough!" she moaned.

"If—if, madrina! What is the use of ifs now?" cried Barbara. "You did what you thought right, and we can't bear to have you reproach yourself. I'll answer that advertisement, and we'll try to enter the lists to fight for you like true knights—pity we're girls, for it spoils my fine simile."

"I think not, Babbie baby; a knightly spirit is quite as often in a girl's breast as in a boy's," said her mother, kissing her.

"The worst of it is that I feel so mean and selfish to let you both help while I idle," said Jessamy. "But I honestly believe I can do more by waiting and following my natural bent. You won't think I'm shirking? When even little Bab is trying to earn her living I feel guilty."

"Even little Bab"—who is anything but even—is only a year younger than you, miss," said Bab; while Phyllis, putting her arms around Jessamy, kissed her and said: "No one would ever suspect you of not playing fair, my crystal cousin."

Phyllis went forth in her blue gown the next day "to secure the young ideas which in the end she would probably want to shoot," Bab said.

She found four foolish girls of fifteen and a newly rich woman, in the person of Mrs. Haines and her daughter and that daughter's friends. They were only too glad to secure a Miss Wyndham for their tutor, a fact even Phyllis's inexperience could not fail to perceive; the arrangement between them was made without loss of time.

"I am engaged, girls," said Phyllis, coming, with very red cheeks, into the room on her return. But she did not say how disagreeable she had found her recent encounter.

Barbara heard nothing from the answer she had made to the advertisement Aunt Henrietta had brought her, so she applied to Mr. Hurd for aid. The little lawyer obtained for her the position of cashier with a friend of his own,

with whom the young girl would at least be secure from many of the drawbacks to a business career which her mother dreaded for her.

But, to Bab's unspeakable mortification, she

had been right when in the beginning of their trouble she had said they were not able to compete with those they had thought inferiors, in doing the serious work of the world.



THE EXPEDITION IN SEARCH OF PEACE. (SEE PAGE 233.)

found that she was incompetent to fill the position. She made change slowly, often wrongly, and at night her columns would not add up right, no matter how often she went over them, nor how carefully she counted her fingers. At the end of a week she came home crestfallen, having been kindly dismissed, to be comforted and petted by her mother and the girls. Accomplishments she had, but practical knowledge, especially of arithmetic, she lacked. Phyllis

After this experiment Mr. Hurd placed Barbara in an office where she was to address envelopes. This she did well, for her fingers and brain were quick; but she was far from an expert, and her salary was but three dollars and a half a week. Fortunately, the office was within walking distance, so that no car-fare had to come from this magnificent result of six days' labor.

Jessamy worked hard at her drawing, and Phyllis went daily to her tutoring, saying so

little of her experiences that her family concluded that they were not wholly pleasant. But one bright ray of hope shone out of the gloom for Phyllis. A little story which she had written was accepted by one of the large syndicates, and paid for—fifteen dollars. The sum was not large, though it was more than half of what she was paid monthly by Mrs. Haines; but the glory, and the hope it shed on the future, were invaluable. On the whole, Phyllis and Barbara found their entrance into the lists not easy, and the blows of the tourney hard, but they kept on with courage fine to see.

They all felt that in some way their skies would brighten when Mrs. Van Alyn returned; she was their "Lady from Philadelphia," and would be sure to find a way through their difficulties. But Mrs. Van Alyn had gone to England to stay until after the holidays, and in the meantime the Wyndhams struggled on.

#### CHAPTER VI.

##### MARK TAPLEY'S KIND OF DAYS.

PHYLLIS was finding her occupation trying. The girls were too near her own age to be easily controlled by her; indeed, they had never been under control in their lives, and study was not part of their programme. They wished to learn only so much French as would serve them in a coming European trip, and this they seemed to expect their young instructor to get into their brains with no effort on their own part.

But the hardest thing about her new life to Phyllis was the insight it gave her to a manner of living which shocked and tortured her; for Phyllis was conscientious, and the first actual contact with the worldly side of the world is bitter to such as she. Although they were three years younger than Phyllis, and that at a time of life when a year's difference in age marks a wide divergence, they were far older than she in many ways. They discussed flirtations, theaters, trashy novels, while munching chocolates during their lesson, betraying the most sordid ambition, till innocent and honest Phyllis was horrified. She went home daily heavy in heart and foot, loathing the atmosphere from which she had come, and wonder-

ing if the world, from which she had hitherto been shielded, was actually governed by such standards as she heard advocated in the Haines household.

Tom, before long, saw that she was looking downhearted and ill, and he made it his business to come home her way and meet her, trying to cheer her into forgetfulness of the annoyances of which he only guessed, for Phyllis could not reconcile it with her idea of honor to talk to any one of what she saw in the home to which she had been admitted. Yet she longed to ask some one if all the world, save her own narrow one, was like this new one. Jessamy and Bab knew no better than she herself, and her aunt was too ill to be troubled. So one day, after an especially trying afternoon, Phyllis met Tom with a keen sensation of relief as well as of pleasure; he looked so manly and reliable that her troubles broke over their barriers almost in spite of herself.

"It's no use, Tom," she said; "I've been trying not to tell you, but I must. Is it I or the world that's out of joint?"

"On general principles, I can assure you that it's not you, Phyllis; you're all right. But, if I might, I should like to have something more explicit," said Tom, looking very kindly down on the flushed, earnest face.

Phyllis began at the beginning, and poured forth to Tom all the matters which had distressed her in the Haines household, ending with a conversation of that afternoon.

"Well, what do you want me to tell you, Phyllis?" asked Tom. "Surely you don't question whether you or heartless, flirting, worldly girls are right?"

"No, not that; right is right, and wrong is wrong—" began Phyllis.

"Always," broke in Tom.

"Yes, I know; but what makes me downright sick is the fear that dear aunty has kept us shut away from a world that is full of this sort of thing—that it is all like this," cried Phyllis. "Are we different from the rest of the world? These months have frightened me."

"Not much wonder," said Tom, heartily. "Poor little soul! Now look here, Phyllis; you're not different from all the world, but you're different from lots of it. The best never

gets run out, but it often runs low. You've been shown the highest standards in everything, and they can't be common. It's much easier to be bad than good for people who start crooked. You started straight, you and Jessamy and Bab. All you've got to do is to be yourself, and not worry. Keep your own ideas and steer by them, and let the rest go. Do you suppose I don't see heaps and piles of things I hate? More than you ever will, because a fellow runs up against the world as no girl does. I'd like to be able to tell you I see none but sweet, modest, true girls; but, honest, there are lots of worldly ones. Girls exasperate me, though I feel mean to say it; they would n't if I did n't think they were so much nicer than we are when they *are* nice. You see, Phyl, girls don't understand that the whole world is in their hands; we're all what women, young and old, make us. Now, you and I had good mothers and sisters. When I went away my oldest sister—she's past thirty—talked to me. 'Shut your eyes to the bold girls, Tom,' she said, 'and take none for a friend you would not like for your sisters' friend. Keep your ideals, and be sure there will always be sweet, wholesome girls in the world to save it.' So I have been shutting my eyes to the strong-minded sisterhood, and the giddy ones too, and just when I was getting too lonely, and needed you, the Wyndhams turned up, thank Heaven! So you'll find it, Phyl; it's a queer, crooked old world, but there are straight folk in it. Keep your ideals, miss, as my sister told me, and 'gang your ways.' And don't take it too hard that there's wrong and injustice in the world; that's being morbid. You'll get used to it; it's the first plunge that costs; the world's like the ocean in that. There's heaps of good lying around, even mixed up with the bad, though that's what no young person sees at first. You know I'm ever so much older than you, because I've been out in the fray some time. Don't get to thinking it's a bad world; it's a good one. The Lord said so when he made it. Thus endeth my first lesson. I never talked so long in all my life, not at one stretch. I sha' n't do so again very soon. Come into this drug-store and have some hot coffee; you look fagged."

"You're such a comfort, Tom," said Phyllis. "I feel much better. There was no use in talking to the girls, because we all know no more and no less than one another, but I did want straightening out. And aunty looks so ill lately, don't you think so?"

Tom looked serious. "I think she is ill, Phyllis," he said. "There's nothing the matter with her except one of the worst things; she is exhausted, worn out with fret and trouble, and she does n't get enough nourishment; she needs nursing."

"Oh, I see it, Tom," cried Phyllis, as they left the soda-fountain. "What can I do?"

"Take care of yourself, for one thing; you don't look right, either," said Tom.

"I feel dragging; that's the only word I know for it," said Phyllis.

"I'm going to fix you up some quinine and calisaya, with malt; I'm not pleased with you of late, Miss Phyllis," said Tom.

Four days later Phyllis trailed her weary way homeward. The end of her first month's labor had come; the twenty-five dollars she had earned lay in her pocket-book in four new bills. Her head ached, her knees felt strangely unreliable, her spine seemed to be some one else's, so burning and painful it felt in its present place, and her eyes played her tricks by showing her objects in false positions and sizes, occasionally flaring up and then darkening completely for a few dreadful seconds.

Jessamy met her at the door with an anxious face. "Mama has given out wholly, Phyl," she said. "She is in bed, and frightens me, she looks so weak, and her heart beats unevenly and feebly."

"That's bad," said Phyllis, so indifferently that Jessamy stared in amazement, then saw with utter sinking of her heart that Phyllis looked desperately ill herself. If Phyllis, the rock on which they all leaned, gave out now, what should she do?

"What is the matter, Phyl?" she asked, putting her arm around her cousin.

"I have no idea. My head aches unbearably; it is a headache that reaches to the soles of my feet," answered Phyllis, miserably. "I've twenty-five dollars in my purse; that will pay for several visits, won't it? Send for Dr. Je-

rome, I mean," said Phyllis, uncertainly. She dropped her hat on the floor beside her, and pushed her hair back from her temples as she spoke, resting both elbows on her knees. "One of the girls is ill; the doctor thought it might be typhoid," she added.

"Is that contagious?" demanded Jessamy, her breath shortening.

"I don't know. Don't be afraid, Jessamy. I'm too full of pain for anything else to get in. I could not catch it," said Phyllis, with no intention of being humorous.

Jessamy waited to hear no more. Running across to Tom's room, she knocked impatiently.

"Oh, Tom, dear Tom, do come quick!" she cried. "Phyllis has come home so ill that I'm more frightened about her than about mama now."

They found Phyllis exactly as Jessamy had left her. Tom felt her pulse; her hands were burning, her pulses galloping. "She must wait till the doctor comes; I'll give her a sedative, but I'd rather not do anything more," said Tom, looking grave. "Get her to bed, and don't look so hopeless, dear girl. Phyllis is possibly going to have the grip,—the real thing, not a cold under that name,—and though it is a severe sickness, it does not need such a tragic face to meet it."

But Jessamy would not smile. "One of Phyllis's pupils has a fever; the doctor thinks it may be typhoid; is that contagious?" she asked.

For the life of him Tom could not repress a

slight start; then he bethought himself, and answered cheerfully: "Not a bit; only infectious. Get Phyllis quiet in bed, and try not to borrow trouble."

But as he crossed the hall he shook his head



"TOM HAD CAMPED OUT, AND HE INSISTED ON COOKING THE STEAK." (SEE PAGE 236.)

like an old practitioner. "Not contagious, it is true; but Phyl has been in the same atmosphere as that girl, and may have contracted typhoid under the same conditions," he said, rubbing Nixie's head absent-mindedly as the little dog poked it into his hand, recognizing his master's troubled expression. "I don't like it, Nixie, old man; I confess I don't like it at all."

Dr. Jerome came. His verdict as to Mrs. Wyndham corroborated Tom's; she needed



careful nursing, nourishing, complete rest, and cheer. And to insure the latter prescription there was Phyllis! On her case the doctor said it was far too early to decide, but — yes, it might be typhoid. He would do all he could to break it up, but Phyllis was seriously ill. There must be a nurse; even though Barbara gave up her employment to help Jessamy, they were both too inexperienced to undertake a case in which everything depended on the nursing.

Barbara came home into the trouble, very tired, and discouraged over her own uselessness. She who had felt so confident that she could do anything had thus far been able to earn only three dollars and a half for many hours' labor; in the old days she had spent that in a week on candies. Jessamy and she had a consultation, at which Tom assisted, as to the present situation. Tom undertook to procure a woman who had nursed in his family, and who, he felt sure, would serve him for less than the usual terms of a professional nurse. "The two patients must be separate, of course," he added. "You and Bab will use my room, and the nurse will take her share of rest where it suits her."

"And where will you sleep, you dear, generous boy?" cried Jessamy.

"I've a friend I can bunk with till you're through with the room," said Tom. "It won't trouble me a bit, so don't call me names, Princess."

Tom's good woman came; she was the kindest soul in the world, and no less competent than kind. Barbara gave up her envelopes to help Jessamy; with two patients she was needed, and even then there were hardly hands enough to render the service required. Tom ran in and out at all hours of the day and night: Jessamy felt that if she lived ninety-nine years she could never repay him for his help and cheer, though she devoted her life to trying to do so.

Mrs. Wyndham lay in that wearying state of feebleness peculiar to exhausted nerves — not in actual danger, except the danger of continued prostration. But Phyllis grew more ill; twice a day the old doctor came to watch her progress, which was steadily downward. Out of the five hundred dollars coming to the Wyndhams quarterly there was an excess over neces-

sary expenditures of about ninety dollars; this was all the capital Jessamy had in hand to meet the present emergency, and underlying her other anxieties was the fear that she should be obliged to borrow of Aunt Henrietta to tide herself through the double illness which had come upon them. Her mother required all sorts of expensive food preparations, and Jessamy realized that her little fund would not carry them further on their hard road than three weeks' distance.

Christmas was coming — the Christmas they had dreaded at best to meet in a boarding-house, the first since they became homeless; but now what a Christmas it was!

Barbara, sitting, as she did every moment that the nurse would intrust Phyllis to her, close by her cousin's bed, thought with falling tears of what Phyllis had always said, that nothing mattered while they had one another. What if they were not always to have one another? What if Phyllis herself, dear, unselfish, sweet Phyllis, was to be the one to go away, leaving a void forever which no one could fill? Bab the light-hearted refused to fulfil her title, but sat stonily looking forward to Phyllis's death. Jessamy, more equable, kept up a little courage, but for her also hope was hard.

And so Christmas Eve dawned grimly enough upon the two poor girls, and on them only, for Mrs. Wyndham was too weak to give more than a sick woman's passing thought to the day, and for Phyllis in her delirium there was neither day nor night.

Dr. Jerome came that morning, and looked more anxious than ever. "Your mother is doing fairly," he said, "but this little girl does not mend; the typhoid symptoms increase, and I'm not heading it off yet. Nurse, if you will get your scissors, I think this heavy hair must come off."

"Oh, don't, please don't cut off Phyllis's beautiful hair!" cried Bab, while Jessamy clasped her hands in mute appeal.

"Nonsense, Bab; it will relieve her more than you can imagine," said Tom, sharply. He had followed the doctor into the room. "It would fall after such an illness; it is better for the hair to cut it: but if it were n't it would still have to be done. Pray be sensible."

The nurse brought the scissors, and with a few strokes the long, warm, dark masses of hair lay on the quilt.

"That's better," said the doctor, as Phyllis moved her head as though at once conscious of relief. He left a few additional directions for the nurse, and went away.

Phyllis's hair lay on a paper; the sunlight, resting on it, brought out its rich reddish tint. Tom lifted a tress tenderly. "Poor, sweet Phyllis!" he said.

Jessamy turned away to the window without a word, and Bab stifled a sob in the table-cover. What a Christmas Eve, indeed!

## CHAPTER VII.

### TAKING ARMS AGAINST A SEA OF TROUBLES.

CHRISTMAS morning dawned clear and cold, with a few errant snowflakes drifting on the wind, as if to show New York that the great Northwest had not forgotten her, but had only delayed its Christmas box of winter weather for a little while.

It is hard wholly to escape the universal joy in the Christmas air, and, in spite of anxiety, Jessamy and Barbara felt more hopeful than they had the night before. Then little crumbs of comfort floated their way in the morning, as the snowflakes were floating without. Beautiful flowers came to Mrs. Wyndham from Mr. Hurd and other friends, and the expressman had left packages for the girls late the preceding night, which the chambermaid with the chronically dust-branded forehead brought up the first thing in the morning. Then the postman came, bringing Christmas greetings to the girls from several old friends, and a letter from Mrs. Van Alyn, with an ivy-leaf from Stratford-on-Avon for Phyllis, a photograph of Botticelli's beautiful little picture of the Nativity, from the National Gallery, for Jessamy, and for Bab an oak-leaf from the sleepy old English town whence the first ancestor of the Wyndhams had sailed away to America two hundred years before. But best and most wonderful of all, he brought a note from Aunt Henrietta, which Jessamy read aloud to Bab after they were upstairs.

"MY DEAR NIECES," it ran: "I am con-

cerned to hear that your mother and Phyllis are ill, though it would be more becoming if you had acquainted me with the fact directly, rather than leave me to learn it circuitously through Mrs. Haines. I trust Phyllis is not going to have typhoid, like the Haines child. Also that your mother will try to overcome her natural weakness. It is a pity she has none of the Wyndham endurance —"

"Yet dear papa died, not madrina," interrupted Bab.

"I should have been to see you," continued Jessamy, "but that I myself have been suffering. I have had a severe attack of bronchitis, and the doctor thought I should not escape appendicitis —"

"Mercy! They're not much alike, except in that horrible long *i* sound!" exclaimed Bab, who grew what Tom called "Babbish" the moment pressure on her spirits was relaxed.

"Do be still, Babbie," cried Jessamy, and read on: "Escape appendicitis; but the symptoms were caused, as you may conjecture, by acute indigestion. When I am able to be out I shall go to see you. In the meantime I send you each a small Christmas remembrance which may be useful to you in your present circumstances. Your affectionate aunt, HENRIETTA HEWLETT."

The "small Christmas remembrance" was a check for each member of the family of twenty-five dollars. Jessamy snatched them up greedily. No one knew how she had dreaded applying to Aunt Henrietta for a loan, and now Aunt Henrietta herself had precluded the necessity! A hundred dollars! It would carry them more than two weeks into the new year, when their interest came in; perhaps before this windfall was used they might be able to dispense with the nurse. It is difficult to be hopeful with money anxieties corroding the heart, and with these relieved Jessamy and Bab looked on their two dear patients for the first time with courage, pressing each other's waist with their encircling arms, feeling very grateful for the comfort Christmas had brought them, and something very like love for Aunt Henrietta, who, in spite of ways all her own, had done a generous thing.

Mrs. Black rose to the requirements of the

festival, and gave her "guests" an unwonted feast; Mrs. Wyndham took little bits of the delicate meat around the turkey wishbone with more relish than she had shown for anything since her breaking down.

After dinner Ruth Wells came down, her basket on her arm, like a happy combination of Little Red Riding-Hood and Little Mabel, whose "willing mind" could not have been as ready to serve others as kindly Ruth's. Out of her basket she produced a veil-case for Jessamy, a handkerchief-case for Bab, a glove-case for Phyllis, all embroidered in tiny Dresden flowers on white linen—not in her spare moments, for Ruth had no spare moments, but in those she had pilfered from her work for her friends. And for the sick ones were clear jellies, and a mold of blanc-mange, with bits of holly stuck blithely on the top.

"Oh, Ruth, how could you make all these, and how did you get them down here?" cried Bab.

"That comes of having one's own flat and not boarding," laughed Ruth; "at least, as far as the making goes. As to getting them down, a little more or less, once you have a basket, does n't matter. Your mother looks decidedly brighter."

"Yes; she ate with a little appetite to-day. But Phyllis does n't improve. And oh, Ruth, they have cut off her hair!" said Jessamy.

"Well," said Ruth, stoutly, "what of it? You speak as though it were her head. I suppose it won't be like the raveled-yarn hair on the knit doll I had when I was a little tot; I cut that off when he was going to a party, and was dreadfully grieved that it never grew again. Phyllis's will, I suspect."

"Come and see her," said Jessamy. Ruth followed. She really was a wonderfully comforting girl. Not a shadow of regret could Jessamy and Bab, watching her closely, discover as she looked on poor shorn Phyllis, lying quietly just then. Instead Ruth said cheerily:

"It will probably grow out in little soft curls all over her head, and how pretty she will look!"

And, as if to reward Ruth for her goodness, Phyllis opened her eyes, smiled faintly, and said, in a hardly audible voice: "I'm lazy, Ruth."

It was the first sign of recognition she had given since she had become unconscious, and Jessamy and Bab clutched each other in speechless joy. To be sure, Phyllis said no more, but dropped away again into that mysterious space wherein the sick exist, and Tom had gone away to keep the holidays with his family, so there was no one to whom they could fly to ask just how good a symptom this might be. But the nurse told them that, though it might mean little, it was encouraging, and the eager girls resolved to take it at its highest valuation, to get all the joy they could out of a Christmas not too bright at best.

"Good-by, Ruthy; you are so heartening! I wish madrina could take you for a tonic; I'm sure I don't know any other equal to you," said Bab, as Ruth left them.

The last seven days of the year slipped by with alternations of hope and fear for Phyllis filling Jessamy and Barbara's moments—for Phyllis, because the question of whether she was to throw off the fever or settle down to long typhoid was determining, and Mrs. Wyndham's condition involved no present danger. On the whole, hope predominated; the times in which Phyllis had lucid moments grew more frequent and longer; Dr. Jerome looked more cheerful each day.

But finally, as if she knew that the time of good resolutions and amendment had come, on the closing night of the year Phyllis threw off the last trace of her fever, and lay white and weak, but smilingly conscious, to greet the New Year's dawn.

Tom and Nixie came back to hear the good news, bringing cheer with them. Altogether Jessamy felt that night, when she lay down to sleep, that her troubles were nearly over, and she saw light ahead. She had yet to learn that the long days of convalescence held trials greater than those she had borne.

In the first place, the January days fulfilled the old prophecy of increased cold with greater length, and the little stoves, to which she and Bab offered up holocausts of knuckles and finger-tips, tried them almost past endurance.

"It really is n't the stove that bothers me," said Bab, falling back on her heels as she knelt before it, and raising a discouraged and smutty

face to Jessamy. "The stove is like the rest of us: it would behave better if it could get something to consume."

That was true; it took constant battling to keep coal on hand to replenish the fire. Mrs.

Black's interest in the coal question was only to save it, and the result was that the swift-drawing cylinder-stoves were perilously low half the time.

The matter of getting food suitable to convalescents kept the poor girls' nerves quivering. They bought chops and gave them to Mrs. Black to be cooked, bribing the cook to do it well; but the meat that had looked so succulent and so tender when it was cut reappeared dry and blackened, with congealing fat around the edges of the plate, or else was so rare that Phyllis's big hungry eyes filled with tears at the mere sight of it.

Jessamy and Bab tried extracting beef-juice in glass jars with cold water and salt, as Mrs. Wells taught them to do, and they got a broiling-fork and cooked chops over their stoves until the irascible old man below them complained to the landlady of the odor of broiling. Jessamy began to have a little line between her eyes, and her sweet voice grew almost sharp from nervous strain; while Bab, though

she really struggled hard "to be good," as she said, found her naturally quick temper roused beyond her ability to curb it in the effort to obtain justice, if not kindness, for her dear patients, whose recovery depended on proper care.

For a month these two poor little heroines struggled on in a daily round of petty annoyances—not petty, after all, when one considered what was involved.

"We 're getting awful, Jessamy," said Bab, tearfully, one sad night. "We 're getting sharp-tempered, nervous, hard; and I wonder where shall we end?"

"Come in here, girls," was heard in Phyllis's voice, still tremulous, from the next room. "And do bring Tom."

Tom and Nixie had resumed their old quarters since the nurse had gone, and now both the dog and his master came as readily as



"LOOK OUT, TRUCHI-KI, YOU 'LL FALL!" PHYLLIS SAID." (SEE PAGE 238.)

they always did when any one of the Wyndhams called them.

"I heard what you said, Babbie," said Phyllis, motioning Tom to the seat of honor, and welcoming Nixie to her side in the big chair. "I've been seeing what a hard time you were having, and I want to tell you both what we 're going to do."

"It sounds rather solemn, Phyl, summon-

ing us to a conclave like this. If we're going to do anything bad, don't tell us to-night," said Jessamy.

"What we're going to do—or what I'm going to do—is go to housekeeping," Phyllis said.

There was a shout of laughter from her audience, after a moment of surprised silence.

"You look like housekeeping just now," said Bab.

"I look less like boarding," said Phyllis, stoutly. "Ruth Wells is perfectly right. We should be far better off in a little home of our own, 'be it ever so humble.' It takes strong—no, I mean tough people to get on without home comforts. You and Jessamy are getting utterly worn out, as nervous and fretted as you can be, and if you put half the strength it takes to live this way into healthy housework you would have everything you need, and not be tired, still less cross."

"Phyllis is right!" cried Tom. "It's a miserable way to live."

"Of course I'm right," said Phyllis. "Now I've been figuring. It costs us about sixteen hundred a year to live in this wretched way, and I don't know what you are spending besides for these nourishing things aunty and I are having."

"I do," said Jessamy, with a half-humorous, half-genuine sigh.

"I am sure you do, and that it is awful," said Phyllis. "Well, now listen. We are going to take a flat, the best we can find for the money, at forty dollars a month. We are going to have a woman come in two days each week to wash, iron, and sweep, at a dollar and a quarter a day, making about a hundred and twenty-six dollars a year. We are going to cook on gas—Ruth said so—seventy-two dollars more. And we're going to live plainly, but have nice, wholesome things to eat, and all we want, for six hundred a year—Ruth again, and she knows! And that makes a total of thirteen hundred dollars, allowing a little margin. That's three hundred dollars less than we spend now, and even if it were more, who would n't rather be in her own dear little home, with all scratchy, maddening things and people shut out?"

Phyllis stopped, breathless, and the others

Vol. XXIX.—30.

had listened in so much the same condition that it was a moment before any one spoke. Then Bab leaped to her feet, and ran over to hug Phyllis in a rapture. "You dear, quiet, splendid old Phyllistine!" she cried. "It's just blissfully lovely! To think of you being the one to do it, when you're still so weak and forlorn!"

"Ask me to tea; have me up to help; let me catch the crumbs from your table," said Tom. "Phyllis, you're a trump, and you've saved the day."

"Crumbs from the table!" cried Jessamy, catching her breath. "That's just it. It's a dream, Phyl, but how in the world can we do it? There won't be any crumbs from the table, nor anything to eat. We can't do anything, any of us. I'm not sure mama understands cooking."

"Aunty can direct a cook," said Phyllis; "and I'm not afraid, with a good cook-book, and Ruth to ask. We can learn a few things, and do them every day, if necessary. It's better than this, at the worst, and we shall save money, too. If we failed, we could have one servant, and still spend no more than we do now. You and Bab go to look for flats to-morrow. You'll see I'm right."

Phyllis's last remark settled the question. If they could afford a servant in case of necessity, there could be no risk in the attempt. Barbara would not admit risk in any case. Tom was unselfishly enthusiastic over the scheme, though he said he dared not think of his loneliness if they left the "Blackboard." But Bab hospitably gave him the freedom of the new apartment, and before they separated for the night the place was rented, furnished, and they had moved in. And, best of all, Tom had promised Phyllis that she should own a kitten.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE TURN OF THE LANE.

JESSAMY and Barbara were ready for their expedition in search of peace by nine o'clock the next morning.

"Phyllis is rather like the centurion in the gospel: she tells one to go, and she goeth, and to another to do this, and she doeth it. That is n't



irreverent, because the centurion was only a Roman soldier—not even a prophet,” said Bab, as she toiled up the elevated-road steps at Thirty-third Street. “I wonder what it is in Phyl we all yield to?”

“She is very decided, with all her quietness, for one thing, and we have learned that she is generally right and pulls us out of difficulties, for another,” said Jessamy. “Wait; I think I’ve two tickets.”

“What does it matter? We shall need them when we’ve moved uptown,” said Bab, airily, as she dashed ahead and deposited ten cents at the ticket-seller’s window.

It was not a wholly attractive section of the city where they found themselves on their arrival at One Hundred and Fourth Street. Jessamy and Bab felt their ardor dampened after they had rung several janitors’ bells in uniformly small vestibules decorated with stenciling on the ceilings and walls, and possessing too many little brass speaking-tubes and electric bells, and, in many cases, too many small children munching cookies and staring, round-eyed, at the strangers.

But Barbara said, “Where there’s scope there’s hope, and New York is large,” and they kept on cheerfully. At last they discovered a house farther uptown, but still below the bend of the elevated road (around which they felt certain their mother would never travel), which looked attractive. The rosy-cheeked German janitor’s wife showed them seven rooms, not large, but not as small as the others they had seen, looking on a quiet street, with the upper entrance to Central Park only two blocks away. The rent of the apartment, they were told, was forty-five dollars a month, but since it was February the janitor thought it could be had for forty. Jessamy and Barbara, unversed in landlords’ ways, trembled lest some one should get their bargain before they had time to report it at home and secure it.

“Oh, girls,” cried Phyllis, on their return, when she had heard of their success, “Mrs. Van Alyn has come; she’s been here. She approves our plan, but she advises us to settle everything without speaking to aunty, for she thinks she is too weak to see anything but its disadvantages. And—and—oh, Jess! oh, Bab! I’m

half crazy. She has some of our dearest things stored away for us, because she felt sure we should sometime have another home: uncle’s chair, Bab’s piano, our desks, tables, photographs, casts—oh, I don’t know what!—out of our dear old home, all ready for this little new one!”

Bab turned white, then took a header into the pillows to smother the irrepressible cry of joy which her mother must not hear, while Jessamy, who had silently mourned her lost treasures more than either of the others, dropped into the rocking-chair, crying for happiness.

It was a great comfort that Mrs. Van Alyn approved the new plan; it made it better if it should go wrong: for Jessamy did not like to assume the entire responsibility of such a radical change of which her mother was to be ignorant. The flat was taken, and then the joy of furnishing began.

New papers, a soft gray-green in the parlor, a rich red, olive, and brown tapestry in the dining-room, with soft imitations of burlaps in the small bedrooms, completely altered the effect given by the ugly papers which had preceded them. Pretty denims, labor-saving as well as pretty, covered the bedroom floors, and the dining-room and parlor floors were stained for a border to their tasteful rugs. The three-foot hall running through the apartment was also stained, and black goatskin rugs, laid at intervals, softened the sound of feet; they were real of their kind, and Jessamy abhorred imitations.

Ruth was called into consultation for kitchen furnishing. She and Barbara spent a delightful morning in a hardware-shop, buying bright tins and fascinating japanned boxes, as pretty in the eyes of the homesick girls as art treasures. Jessamy, Phyllis, and Bab were so wild with delight during these last days they could hardly get through them, so impatient were they to take possession of their kingdom. Tom was not less excited than they; not a day passed without his bringing home some wonderful contribution to the coöperative housekeeping, in which coöperation he claimed his full share.

And at last, on the day before the Wyndhams were to move uptown, Mrs. Van Alyn carried Tom off with her to the apartment, forbidding the girls their own precincts, and with

his help set in place the priceless treasures of old association which her kindness had kept for them from a past more splendid, but which the present promised to equal in happiness.

And thus the great day came. Mrs. Wyndham had been told but two days before of the home awaiting her, and received the news with rather more apprehension than pleasure. Phyllis gave up all thought of returning to Mrs. Haines; they hoped to save under the new arrangement more than she had earned there, and to do this her services were needed at home. Mrs. Van Alyn once more sent her carriage for her friend's use, Mrs. Black "assembled," as Tom said, to see her off, and Phyllis shared her aunt's drive, with refreshments for both invalids to sustain them until they got home. Home!—a word to conjure with, driving illness away. The coachman was bidden take them up through the park at an easy pace, and so, in the carriage in which she had been borne away from her first home, poor Mrs. Wyndham, full of the recollection, too ill and sad to share the girls' enthusiasm, rode away to her new one.

The trunks, and all Tom's mad contributions to the apartment, had gone away early, and as soon as the door had closed on their mother and Phyllis, Jessamy and Bab tore up the long flights to get their hats and jackets and hasten after them.

Bab seized Jessamy around the waist and waltzed her all over both empty rooms, singing at the top of her voice, while the chambermaid pushed her reddish pompadour out of her eyes to see better, and grinned sympathetically; she liked the Wyndhams, and would have rejoiced to get out of bondage herself.

"Come on, Jess! Don't stop for gloves; put them on in the train for once. Got everything? Oh, hurry! We must get there first, and I'm wild to see what Mrs. Van Alyn and that boy did yesterday! Don't stop for gloves, please,—I'm going crazy!" cried Bab.

"You're crazy now," said Jessamy; but she tucked her gloves into her coat-pocket, and her voice shook, her cheeks were crimson. "Come, then. Good-by, Nellie; I hope you will be well and happy. Good-by, old room; we might have left you sorrowful instead of rejoicing, and at least I may thank you for that."

Barbara was already half-way downstairs; Jessamy ran after her, and they reached the lower hall breathless, to find Mrs. Black waiting to say farewell.

"I wish you luck," she said, with an air that implied it was a hopeless desire for any one mad enough to leave her sheltering roof. "You'll find housekeeping very different from having no cares and being free to enjoy yourselves. I hope you may be happy, and your ma won't break down under the strain; she can't stand much."

The ride to Harlem seemed endless to the two girls, but at last the tedious journey ended, and once they had turned east out of crowded Columbus Avenue, Jessamy and Bab fairly ran down the street on which their apartment waited them.

They let themselves into the house with their own latch-key. The janitor's wife was cleaning brasses, and said good morning pleasantly, but with no notion of what a great event was happening before her Swabian eyes. How could she have, poor soul, since people move in and out of apartments every day, and few of them are young exiles, hungry for home, come to take possession of the Land of Promise?

Jessamy's heart beat so that she could hardly get upstairs; but Bab honorably waited for her, and would not put the key into the lock—not the general lock of the outer door, solemn as that ceremony had been, but the sacred, blessed lock of their own private entrance. She threw the door open, clutched Jessamy's hand, who returned the pressure with interest, and together they entered.

They ran from room to room, calling each other, sobbing and laughing, and kissing the inanimate things like crazy girls. Phyllis's desk stood in her room, and beside her bed the little rocking-chair Bab loved best held out its arms to her. In the dining-room they found silver they had thought never to see again, and dishes which they knew would be equal to food, whether empty or full, to their mother.

They made their excited way back to the parlor, and Jessamy dropped, exhausted, into the window-seat, which was mysteriously draped in white lace, though they had made up their minds to self-denial in the matter of curtains.

Her eyes rested on her father's chair, and her lips trembled with joy and gratitude. "Oh, the Lord bless that dear, dear Mrs. Van Alyn!" she said, though she usually found such expression impossible.

Barbara opened the piano and laid her hands on the keys. She struck two or three chords of "Home, Sweet Home," and laid her head down on the pretty case to cry the happiest tears she had ever shed.

It was fortunate that Jessamy and Barbara had more than half an hour to await the arrival of the invalids, for neither Phyllis nor their mother was strong enough to encounter them while their excitement was at its height. When they arrived the girls had calmed down enough to open the door quietly and say, with only a little tremor in the voice of each: "Welcome home, mama and Phyllis!"

Phyllis looked white after her drive, but the color rushed from her throat to her short hair at the sight that met her eyes. She did not attempt to go farther than the parlor sofa, where Bab led her, and lay still, in a trance of delight, looking from one dear picture to another, letting the soothing green tone of the room sink into her brain and rest her as if a cool hand had been laid on her throbbing nerves.

Mrs. Wyndham did not get beyond her husband's chair. She sank into it, laid her weary head against the cool leather, and burst into quiet tears. But even the inexperienced girls recognized them for tears that would restore her, standing for the breaking up of the apathy which had been the worst phase of her illness, and they felt certain they had done well in taking matters into their own hands and giving the frail little mother a home once more.

Oh, the joy of preparing that first dinner, to which Ruth and Tom came! Tom had camped out, and he insisted on cooking the steak; Ruth showed the girls how to boil potatoes so that they would neither crumble to bits nor emerge water-soaked from the operation. What bliss it was to Jessamy to make the tea by the venerable rule of one teaspoonful for each cup, and one to the pot! And the unutterable joy of peering into the fat little Japanese teapot later, with an air of experience, to see if it were

drawn! And the still greater happiness of making cocoa for the invalids, in the alluring agate saucepan, brought forth from beneath the kitchen closet to be useful for the first time in its gray satin-finish life!

Bab was delirious—cut a slice of bread, and ran to hug her mother; set the cold water running, and then was saved by Jessamy from filling the pitcher from the hot-water faucet. Jessamy took her happiness in another way. She went about with an uplifted look on her lovely face; touched everything with a kind of reverence, brooding over the teacups and lifting the butter-jar as if they were little babies. She forgot nothing, left nothing undone, and when she went to call her mother and Phyllis to their first meal at home, though her voice would quaver, they were summoned to a perfect meal, thanks to her, and in spite of Bab's temporary craziness.

Nixie had a brilliant red bow, which he despised, on his collar for the occasion, and was fed in turn by every one till he could eat no more, and retired to the front of the radiator to meditate on the advantages of house-keeping.

Mrs. Wyndham took her place at the head of her table, and showed such an improved appetite that Jessamy and Bab made their dinner chiefly of rapture, watching her and Phyllis enjoy the juicy steak.

"Now I've one more contribution to this mansion," said Tom, laying aside the gingham apron he had insisted on donning to help wash the dishes, when everything was once more in order. "I wanted to show you it before dinner, but I feared we'd get nothing to eat. Your mother has it in the parlor; it's for Phyllis."

Phyllis, guessing, jumped from the rocking-chair where she had been installed in range of the kitchen door to watch the dish-washing, and ran, as if she had never been ill, into the parlor. There sat her aunt, and in her lap lay curled up, like a powder-puff, the tiniest, whitest kitten ever seen! Phyllis had it cuddled in her neck in a moment.

"Oh, Tom, it's lovely! Oh, if you only knew how I'd been wanting a kitten! How did you find such a white one?" she cried rapturously.

"I've had it engaged for ten days; we've been waiting for it to learn to eat; it's only a month old," said Tom, looking very happy in Phyllis's pleasure. "Its mother is a white lady of most favorable record and perfect manners. They say her kittens are models in every way. Hope this one will do you and her credit."

"It shall be called 'Truce,' because we're at peace, and it's all white," said Phyllis.

"Truce is n't peace. However, it's a nice name," said Tom. "I called it 'Antiseptic Cotton'; it looks just like the packages of cotton we use in the hospitals; but I don't mind if you change the name—it is not quite convenient to call."

"Horrid!" said Bab, decidedly. "Truce is pretty. I think you might let some one else see just the tip of its tail, Phyl; we like kittens, too."

"This adds the very last touch of homeiness to everything," said Phyllis, generously handing her treasure to Bab. "Bless you, Tom, for getting it."

#### CHAPTER IX.

##### HOME-KEEPING HEARTS.

THE Wyndhams had been "out of Egypt," as Phyllis called it, a month. Tom painted a highly decorative sign bearing the word "Canaan" in gold letters on a red ground, to be placed over the front door, because his friends were not only out of Egypt, but entered into the Land of Promise. Although it was not quite possible to hang the inscription in the front hall, Phyllis would not discard it, but placed it over the window in the dining-room; the flat was indeed the Land of Promise to them all, and each realized it in her own way.

Mrs. Wyndham was almost entirely well; her improvement had been rapid from the first, and she was far happier than she had been since the fatal day when Mr. Hurd had come to tell her of her loss—a day that was now nearly a year in the past.

Phyllis was completely recovered; she was too happy to be less than well. Her hair had grown out in soft rings of curls, as Ruth had prophesied it would, and she had never been half as pretty in her life as now, with present joy and hope for the future shining in her beau-

tiful eyes. For Phyllis was dreaming and working; when household duties were done she spent certain hours of each day over her desk, and it was hard for her not to share Jessamy and Barbara's conviction that her little stories were one day to see the light.

The new plan was working triumphantly; the girls were so afraid of the failure prophesied for them that they dared not spend what they could honestly afford to spend, and their first month's bills were under the estimate; yet they had everything they needed for comfort as well as health. There were bad days, when everything went crossways from dawn till sunset—such days as will come to all households, even the best regulated. But when they came the girls treated them politely, pretending not to notice that they were crooked, as Phyllis suggested doing, and so those days came less often to them than to people who dwelt on their deficiencies.

Jessamy and Bab were making beds one morning, as usual, and Phyllis was out in the kitchen, clearing away the breakfast. Truce was on her shoulder; it was growing fast, but did not seem to find that a reason for abandoning its favorite perch. It was the most loving of small catkins, with golden eyes and a preternaturally long tail, and wore a scarlet ribbon on its scarlet leather collar to set off its pink-lined ears and pink nose and the snowy coat its devoted mistress kept spotless with soap and water. Truce never objected to anything Phyllis chose to do; indeed, Truce had what Bab called "reversed hydrophobia," for water had such an irresistible fascination for it that anything containing water was in danger from the meddlesome little white paws, whether it was the biggest water-pitcher or the daintiest vase.

Phyllis was singing, as usual. The two girls in the room near by heard her chanting to a tune of her own:

"Stay, stay at home, my heart, and rest:  
Home-keeping hearts are happiest;  
For those that wander they know not where  
Are full of trouble and full of care;  
To stay at home is best."

Then she apparently tired of Longfellow, for there were a few moments of silence, alter-

nating with chatter to the kitten. Suddenly she began singing to a swinging, not particularly tuneful tune, like those sung by children in their games; this time it was a funny little song of her own:

"Home-y and happy, cheery and bright,  
New tins to left of me, new tins to right;  
A little white kitten to pet and to cuddle,  
And purr, back my peace when I get in a muddle;  
A getting-well mother, two girls, and a cat—  
My joys are so many they 're crowding' the flat.

Look out, Truchi-ki, you 'll fall!" And Jessamy and Bab heard a saucepan-cover drop, and guessed Phyllis had put up her hand to steady Truce on her shoulder.

"Copyrighted, Phyl?" called Bab; but Phyllis, on her knees looking at her cake in the oven, did not hear, and Jessamy put her hand over her sister's lips. "Let her alone, Bab; listen; she may improvise again," she said. "Now she 's beginning to sweep, and that usually inspires her."

Phyllis's broom flew, and Jessamy and Bab waited developments. Evidently Truce had dismounted and was ready for the frolic that sweeping always meant, for they heard Phyllis laugh, and cry: "Look out, Chuchi-ki! How do you expect me to sweep if you hold my broom? I 'll spank you, kitten; you 've never had one tiny, least spanking in all your life!" Phyllis always talked nonsense to Truce, whose name had developed through an Italian pronunciation of Truce, Truchi, Chuchi, and finally into the Japanese-sounding Chuchi-ki, which Phyllis said meant "Trucie ki-tten," but which Jessamy more correctly defined as meaning nonsensical affection. Luckily for them, however, all the Wyndhams loved nonsense. To prove it, Phyllis began to sing once more—a long jumble of nonsense in one rhyme:

"Trouble found me where I sat,  
But I did n't care for that,  
Only learned my lesson pat;  
Then I took a heavy bat,  
And I hit old Trouble—spat!  
And I gave him tit for tat;  
Last, I drowned him in a vat.  
Now I 've learned to make a hat,  
Wash a dish, and sweep a mat,  
And I think I 'm getting fat  
In this blessed little flat,

With my snowy Trucie-cat;  
I 'm so very happy that  
I don't know where I am at!"

This was too much for the audience; two peals of laughter rang out from the bedroom, echoed by Mrs. Wyndham from the hall.

"Going crazy, Phyl?" gasped Bab.

"I don't know; I don't see that it matters," returned Phyllis. "I 'm brushing up our own kitchen, and everything I 've sung is true; I 'd like to know what consequence a little more or less sanity is under these circumstances? Oh, dear peoplekins, do you think we shall ever get used to this niceness? You need n't laugh at my inspirations; they 're real hymns of praise in spirit, even if they sound crazy."

"I am the one to sing hymns of praise, dear little Phyllis," said Mrs. Wyndham, fondly. "No one was ever blessed with three happy, contented, true-hearted props in misfortune as I have been."

"I 'll tell you a secret, mama," said Jessamy, emerging from under Phyllis's desk, where she had been picking up scraps of torn paper. "I suspect it is n't misfortune; I have a deep-seated suspicion that it is good luck that has come to us, and that if we had stayed rich we should have missed getting into the heart of things, and the real fun of living."

"Now be honest, Jessamy," said Bab. "I have entire confidence in Phyllis and myself enjoying makeshifts, but I have a horrid doubt that you may be making the best of it. Don't you wish you could go about, and have all the pretty things you love, and do no housework, only be beautiful all day long?"

Jessamy paused, her color heightened; she was too honest to answer equivocally.

"Sometimes," she said slowly, "I remember that, though we are rather simple girls, and like to stay girlish as long as we can, still we are growing up, and I 'd like a bit more girlish fun, because we can't be young long. The pretty things I don't miss, because I have them—to make a bull. I mean our stock of pretty clothes is not used up; and our flat is simple, but it has the right look; thank fortune, beauty is not a matter of cost. I am very happy, and truly contented; your 'horrid doubt,' Bab, need n't come again. I think this year has



done more for us than we realize, and I am honestly satisfied. But I do hope we may be able to better ourselves; if only my illustrating turns out something, I ask nothing more of fate."

"Hear, hear! — there 's Ruth," Bab broke off suddenly, and ran to admit her friend.

Ruth had come to spend the day, and hem the ruffles of her new white dimity, for there were hints of spring in the air, and the willows near the northern entrance to Central Park had a filmy, yellow-green effect in the distance, as if the coming leaves were foreshadowed in a mist of sap.

The girls gathered in Phyllis's room, where the sewing-machine stood, with its top invitingly laid back ready for the "bee." The Wyndhams were to sew on spring garments, too, and they all had prepared for a pleasant day.

"If we had nothing to do but practise a little music, get through a little shopping, make and receive a few calls, we should miss this sort of pleasantness," said Jessamy, touching up a bow on the hat she was trimming, and holding it off to look at it in the glass in true artistic manner.

"Half the best things in life are not to be met on the highways; it 's the byways which are loveliest, figuratively and literally," said Ruth, contentedly.

"That sounds like a poem condensed into prose," remarked Bab. "Are you going to drop into poetry?"

Ruth laughed. "All happy people are more or less poetical, I fancy," she said. "I wonder if Silas Wegg meant more than he knew when he talked about dropping into poetry in the light of a friend? If you 're friendly toward life and people, then you get happy, then poetical; it 's a clear sequence in my mind, only I have n't expressed it clearly."

"Not very, Ruthlet, and that 's undeniable," laughed Phyllis. "I 'm certain Mr. Wegg meant nothing so complex, even if he had a wooden leg. However, your idea is all right; I know from experience one becomes a poet under pressure of happiness."

"One does; the rest don't," said Jessamy. "Phyllis sings yards of rhymes when she 's

salubrious, but Bab and I remain prose copies. Oh, dear, there 's the bell, just when we are so cozy!"

"Here is Mrs. Van Alyn, girls; she 's coming in there," called Bab from the hall.

"I have come to be disagreeable and spoil all your plans," said Mrs. Van Alyn, kissing Phyllis and Jessamy. "Don't get up, dears; the end of the bed is all I want, for I mean to hurry off, and take Jessamy with me." And she pushed one side the breadths of an organ-die Jessamy was cutting.

"Oh, don't sit on Trucie!" cried Bab. "The kitten 's somewhere there, asleep, after bothering our lives out."

"Dear me!" cried Mrs. Van Alyn, jumping up hastily. "Why, Barbara, you scamp, why did you startle me so? The kitten is rolled up in the pillow-sham. Where is your mother?"

"Mama went out to market, and to sit in the park awhile; she has n't come in," said Bab.

"Then I can speak in ordinary tones; the worst of these dear little apartments is that the rooms are too close together to allow secrets," laughed Mrs. Van Alyn. "I would rather your mother should not know of my errand, lest it lead to hopes that would come to nothing. There is a young lawyer of my acquaintance — the son of very nice people I met in the Berkshires — who had a desk in Mr. Abbott's office over a year ago; he thinks he may be able to help Mr. Hurd prove that Abbott made over his property too late to have done so legally, in which case the law would recover part of your loss. I want to carry Jessamy off to lunch, and Mr. Lane, the young lawyer, will call to see her. It will save your mother possible disappointment, and you know enough of the matter to satisfy him, don't you, Jessamy?"

"I know more than when it happened, for then I knew nothing," said Jessamy, rising at once to get ready to go out; "I have tried to learn all about it since. Of course I will go. Dear Mrs. Van Alyn, you are always so good to us!"

"Nonsense, my dear! There is not much goodness in stealing one of you for a few hours; you are such busy bees nowadays I can hardly get a peep at you. Make haste, or such haste

as can be made consistently with looking your prettiest. Old Peter is driving up and down, and I 'm dreadfully afraid of him; he looks unutterable things if I have the horses out longer than he approves. I wish you girls could keep me here all day, instead of the exigencies of the law driving Jessamy and me away. There are never bright spots like this in my house." And Mrs. Van Alyn's sweet face clouded; her three little girls, who would have been the age of the Wyndhams, had been in their graves for more than ten long years.

"Ready, Jessamy sweet?" she asked, as Jessamy returned, looking lovely in her gray gown, with the blush roses nestling against her hair under the soft brim of her hat. "Good-by, Phyllida, Babette, and little Ruth, who manages to glean so much worth having. Tell your mother only that I carried Jessamy off to lunch, and will return her safely."

"Would n't it be nice if we could get some of our money back?" asked Bab, thoughtfully tickling Truce's nose with the end of his long tail, when she had come back from seeing Mrs. Van Alyn and Jessamy off.

"Nice! It would be glorious," cried Phyllis,— "though that does n't sound quite consistent with all we 've been saying."

#### CHAPTER X.

##### THE LITTLE BLIND GOD OPENS HIS EYES.

THERE was grief in the Wyndham apartment for Tom—Tom, who was as dear to them as one of themselves, and who had brightened their days of trial, as he had shared their recent pleasure. Tom and Nixie visited it no more. It was all the fault of Bab, and her mother and the girls were powerless to straighten out the dreadful tangle.

Tom had been gradually showing pretty plainly that, though all the Wyndhams were dear to him, the dearest was the small person who had fallen across his path, quite literally, nearly a year before—that for little Babbie he cherished a feeling different from the brotherly love he gave Jessamy and Phyllis.

Bab herself knew this perfectly well, and it turned her into a pocket-edition of Beatrice;

she flouted poor Tom with more cruelty than "the dear Lady Disdain" bestowed on Benedict. For a time Tom bore her sarcasms and snubbing with pained surprise and patience; but that day was past. He had decided, apparently, that if Bab did not want him he would not inflict his presence upon her, and thus it was that "Canaan" was dreary for the lack of his cheery laugh, and to all the Wyndhams the loss was hard to bear. To all; for, though Bab betrayed her feeling on the subject by no word or sign, she grew thinner, and learned the habit of silence, which transformed her into a being unrecognizable to those who knew her best.

"She 's Barbie, mama, not Babbie," said Jessamy, tears of impatience and regret in her eyes. "She has put a barbed-wire fence all around herself, and she 's not only keeping out our happiness, but the worst of it is, I 'm sure she 's driving off her own happiness, too! And I feel so sorry for Tom that I can hardly keep from saying: 'Oh, Tom dear, just please be fond of me, and let that naughty girl go!'"

"That would be a singular performance on the part of my dignified elder daughter," her mother said, smiling. "I am quite as sorry as you are, my dear, and anxious; but I am trying to let matters take their course, and I think they may straighten themselves."

"They are n't taking their course," sighed Jessamy. "Bab is warping them all out of line. The dreadful part of it is that Babbie is evidently behaving so badly to Tom because she wants to treat him so particularly well. I wish I could straighten her out!"

"Don't try; wait," advised her mother. "Bab is very young. I believe I dread to see one of my girls with a lover, though it be such a dear boy as Tom."

While the Wyndhams had lost one friend, they had gained another—not one to fill the place Tom's absence left vacant, but one they enjoyed greatly. On the top floor of the house where the "Land of Canaan" apartment made the third lived a family whose youngest member, a girl of eleven, frequently held what Bab called "overflow meetings" with her dolls on the steps, for the family was large—as was the doll family, for that matter—and little Margery

was forced, by lack of space, to the street, the playground of city children.

A friendship had sprung up between her and the Wyndhams, especially Bab, born of mutual admiration for Jumeau babies with spasmodic

A rainy day came, and Margery, left alone with the servant, recognized her opportunity. Bab, alone too, as it chanced, was startled by a violent peal of the bell. Answering the summons, she faced the Hortons' maid, white under



"I KNEW THAT IF I WAS AWFULLY ILL MISS BAB WOULD BE NICE TO YOU," MURMURED MARGERY." (SEE NEXT PAGE.)

joints, and a little girl's unspeakable worship for an older one. Margery was a quaint child, given to the companionship of books and people beyond her age, and with the contradicting childishness and maturity of an only child in a family of adults.

Tom was included in her favor, both for his own and for Nixie's sake; once when Margery had a sore throat Tom cured her, and henceforth was brevetted "my doctor," a distinction he valued. As weeks went by Margery's sharp eyes noticed the estrangement and increasing coolness between "her doctor" and her dearest Bab, and finally that Tom came to the house no more. After long puzzling over it, Margery set her nimble wits to work to remedy the wrong she could not understand. Simple methods did not appeal to the queer little girl; at last, however, she hit upon a plan that suited her childish love of the theatrical and an unconfessed longing to be a heroine.

VOL. XXIX.—31-32.

her freckles, who stood on the door-mat, wringing her hands, and crying at the sight of her: "Oh, Miss Wyndham, pl'ase do come up, for the love of Hiven! I do be alone wid Margery, an' she 's took that bad she 'll be dead ag'in' her mother comes back!"

"Dead! Margery!" gasped Bab, and flew up the stairs, in her alarm outstripping Norah.

There was cause for alarm, to the eyes of inexperienced Bab, as she looked at the little figure stretched on the bed, her face swollen out of all likeness to pretty Margery, or even to human features. A crimson face, cheeks, eyelids, lips puffed and distorted, lay on the pillow; crimson hands as shapely as tomatoes picked the quilt; while hollow groans issued from the purpling mouth.

"Oh, Margery!" cried Bab, in an agony of terror, "what has happened? Run, run, Norah, for Dr. Gilbert; I 'll stay with her. It must be poison. Oh, what has she eaten?"

"Nothin', miss, but her lunch wid the rest of 'em," began Norah, while Margery moaned:

"Not Dr. Gilbert; I want my own Dr. Tom."

"Oh, Margery dear, Dr. Gilbert is so much older and wiser," Bab pleaded.

But Margery only burst into plaintive sobs. "I want my own doctor; I should n't think you 'd be cruel to him now," she sighed.

"Then call Dr. Leighton, Norah," said Bab, blushing at this betrayal of Margery's observation. "Only hurry, hurry!"

It seemed hours before Tom came, though Norah met him in the street and returned within fifteen minutes. Bab spent the minutes bathing the still swelling face, soothing the poor little patient, and trying to control her own nerves. Margery grew more ill every moment; would Tom never come?

At last he came, and as he entered the room the relief was so great that Bab forgot to incase herself in the disguise she had worn so long. Her eyes were so full of love and joy as she raised them to Tom that he stopped short in amazement at the revelation, and a great flood of happiness rushed over him, too great for any circumstances to check.

"Oh, Tom, I 'm so glad you 've come! Now it will be all right," said Barbara, in a low voice of absolute trust. "Margery is dreadfully ill, but I am sure you will save her."

Tom did not answer; he walked straight to the bed, without looking at Barbara. His heart throbbed so joyfully that he had hard work to force his thoughts to duty.

"Margery, what have you eaten?" he demanded, having felt the child's pulse and looked closely under the almost closed eyelids.

"Nothing," murmured Margery.

"Margery, remember I am a doctor and know when I am told the truth; you must tell me what you have taken," said Tom, sternly.

Bab crept close to Tom, oblivious to all other considerations on hearing this hint confirming her fear of poison. Tom put one hand over the two little hands clasped imploringly on his shoulder, trying to remember only Margery and to forget that this was Bab coming to him thus voluntarily.

"I always tell the truth," said Margery, with

all the dignity her strength allowed. "I have n't eaten anything, but I did n't say I had n't *taken* anything. I took quinine, but it 's much worse than the other time; I would n't tell you if I was n't dying."

"Quinine! Ah, that 's it! And worse than the other time? Has quinine made you ill in this way before?" asked Tom, comfortingly patting Bab's head, which had drooped on his shoulder at the word "dying."

"Once, but not so bad. I did n't think it would be so awful when I took it, though I did think I 'd feel dreadfully. The doctor said I had an idiotsinkersy in me about taking quinine," groaned Margery.

"Did you take it purposely?" asked Tom, amazed, as he handed Norah a prescription and bade her hasten to get it filled. "That was certainly an idiot-syncrasy! Why have you done such a thing? Do you like to be ill, Margery?"

"No; but — oh, my mama won't like to find me dead!" And Margery burst into open wailing, in which Bab joined.

"You are not going to die," said Tom. "Bab dear, don't cry so; Margery will come out all right. But why, in the name of all that is wonderful, have you taken what you knew would make you ill, little lassie?"

"For your sake," said suffering Margery, as impressively as her swollen features permitted.

"For my sake!" echoed Tom, dumfounded.

"I knew that if I was awfully ill Miss Bab would be nice to you," murmured Margery.

"You dreadful child!" cried Bab, indignantly, springing away from Tom's side.

Margery turned away, hiding her swollen face, tears, and wounded heart silently in her pillow.

"She does n't mean that, Margery," said Tom, gently. "You are hurting her, Bab; you know she adores you. Be just to the poor mite, and remember her motives were good, even if her methods are doubtful," he whispered hastily.

Bab knelt contritely by the bed, and took the queer, forlorn little figure in her arms. "No, of course I did n't mean that," she said. "Forgive me, Margery. What made you think of such a very strange thing to do?"

"The Bible says you ought to lay down your

life for your friends, does n't it?" sobbed Margery, drying her eyes on the ruffle on her night-gown-sleeve, in default of a handkerchief.

"It says you can't prove greater love than by dying for them — yes," said Bab.

"Well, then, I thought I ought to be willing just to be sick for you, when all the books say how every one forgives every one else and foes make up around sick-beds and things. I could n't bear to see you and my doctor getting worse foes all the time, so I took the quinine, though I knew I had an idiotsinkersy in me that made it poison me, and I'd be dreadfully sick. I thought you'd make up around my bed, and love me, and say how I'd saved you, and how you'd never forget me. And now you are friends around my bed, and I'm fearfully sick, but you only call me dreadful! Oh, why don't my mama come and take care of me?" And Margery wailed anew over the ingratitude of humankind.

What could Bab do less than express — though Tom was there — her gratitude to this martyr to her welfare?

"Dear little Margery, you're not dreadful; I am dreadful to have called you so, even though I did n't mean it. You are a dear, devoted little friend. Please forgive me, for you know I love you dearly," she said, kissing the sad, shapeless little face.

"And my doctor?" stipulated Margery, before according pardon.

"I think we shall be better friends; I won't be horrid to him any more," whispered Barbara. And then Margery gave the kiss of peace.

Mrs. Horton returned at this opportune moment, and Tom escorted Bab downstairs, leaving Margery, already better, to her mother's care.

Barbara let herself into the apartment with her key, and for a few moments an awkward silence prevailed, broken at last by Tom.

"I think I shall adopt a Margery rampant, with a quinine capsule in the quartering, for my coat of arms," he said. "Our queer little friend with the constitutional idiosyncrasy against that drug has done me a great service. She has proved that you don't hate me after all, do you, Babbie?"

Bab was silent.

"Barbara Wyndham, don't waste any more

time. You have treated me badly enough, Heaven knows, and I have n't enjoyed it. Tell me this instant that you love me," said Tom, in a tone which Bab might have resented had not her recent fright and humiliation subdued her.

"I love you, Tom," she repeated meekly, and straightway forgot all doubt, all fear, in perfect happiness.

When Jessamy came home, before her mother and Phyllis, she nearly dropped in the doorway, for there was Bab throned in the window, looking radiantly pretty with the joy and womanly tenderness which the events of the afternoon had called forth shining in her face. And beside her, on a low stool, sat Tom, looking entirely blissful and unusually humble. He sprang up at the sight of Jessamy. "Come to your brother, Jessamy!" he cried. "Bab has promised to marry me."

"Indeed, I have promised *not* to marry him," said Bab. "I have told him I will not so much as hear it mentioned for ages. As though I wanted to marry yet!"

But Jessamy waited to hear no more. She threw herself at Bab in some mysterious way, and hugged and kissed her sister, with a kiss for Tom too, in almost hysterical rapture.

"It was pretty rough on me to be treated as I have been lately," said Tom, as they tried to settle down to sanity. "But I ought to have known what it meant, for the very first time I ever saw Bab she threw herself at my feet, for me to take or leave, as I chose."

"Why, Thomas Leighton!" cried Bab, indignantly.

"Fact, and you know it," affirmed Tom. "Never mind, Babbie; 'some falls are means the happier to rise,' you know. That fall of yours on the Blackboard steps was one of them, for, my heart, are n't we happy?"

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE LADY OF THE SCALES.

THERE was mystery in the air of the little apartment from the day on which Mrs. Van Alyn had carried Jessamy away to meet the young lawyer, Robert Lane — mystery from which Mrs. Wyndham felt herself excluded. Evidently the girls were in a conspiracy of some



sort, but their mother did not give the matter much thought, knowing that when they were ready they would confide in her, and feeling quite certain she was excluded from their secrets for her own sake.

Robert Lane, whose possible connection with her fate was unknown to Mrs. Wyndham, became a frequent visitor; sometimes it seemed to her he, too, was concerned in the conspiracy

bad, for they all were as blithe as birds, and Jessamy and Phyllis were as happy over their good fortune as Bab was in her engagement. For Phyllis had written three stories, which Jessamy had illustrated, and two out of the three had been accepted by a reputable magazine, and the editor had asked for more work from both the young aspirants. It seemed to the girls that fortune, fame, and happiness lay at the points of their pen and pencil.

"It is such a nice, quiet time now, mama, with no special work on hand, let's ask Aunt Henrietta to spend the day," said Jessamy, one morning.

Bab groaned, and even Phyllis looked downcast. "Oh, dear, it's awful to have a sense of duty," sighed Bab. "What does make you so dreadfully conscientious, Jessamy?"

"It is n't such a tremendous proof of conscientiousness—" Jessamy began; but her mother interrupted her:

"It is precisely what I have been meaning to suggest. We have scarcely seen our aunt lately, and we owe her attention; she is growing old."

"She is n't growing old, madrina; you know that: she was always old, but she does n't mean to admit it, nor let it increase," said Bab. "Well, I suppose I can maintain my portion of family virtue. Write your note, Jessamy-Griselda, the patient and heroic!"

Aunt Henrietta accepted the invitation, which was for three days later, and appeared, in all the dignity of a stiff black silk, at half-past twelve, because she disapproved of the custom of arriving ten minutes before luncheon; half an hour was not too long, she declared, to rest after reaching one's destination before sitting down to the table.

"You've been getting a new rug for your dining-room," said Aunt Henrietta, in the tone of disapproval which she kept "for family use," as Bab said.

"Yes; that is Phyllis's contribution to our comfort: she bought it with the check from one of her stories," replied Mrs. Wyndham, mildly.

"So Barbara is the only drone!" said Aunt Henrietta. "No, no potatoes; you must know that my doctor forbids them. It is often the one who says most who does least."



A BEARER OF GOOD TIDINGS.

with her girls, but she dismissed the thought as unlikely, since he was such a new acquaintance. Whatever was in the wind, it could be nothing

"Barbara is far from a drone, aunt," said Phyllis, seeing Bab fold her lips with a look at once angry and hurt. "There must be one to help with the housekeeping, and she has all the care of providing. Bab is the most competent little person, and is so cheerful she keeps us all up to the mark."

"Humph!" ejaculated Aunt Henrietta, with a world of significance in the sound. "Take away that dreadful cat; I always detested cats! How people can want animals in such limited space I can't conceive. When are you to be married, Barbara?—or will that young man you are engaged to ever be able to support you?"

"Next fall, if Dr. Leighton has his wish," said Bab, while Phyllis gathered up Truce and bore him, surprised and indignant, from the room, where, as everywhere, he was used to being considered an acquisition. "Dr. Leighton would not have asked me to marry him if he could not support me." Barbara disdained reminding her aunt that Tom was heir to a good inheritance; it would have been unbearable if even Aunt Henrietta, for whose opinion in general she had little regard, looked on her marriage from a mercenary point of view.

"Very probably; he seems to be a very nice young man," said Aunt Henrietta, to Bab's surprise, for she had prepared to do battle for her lover.

The luncheon passed off with no further passage of arms, and Aunt Henrietta settled herself comfortably to slow knitting in the best chair in the parlor, and to conversation with Mrs. Wyndham. The girls were unmistakably "fidgety," as Aunt Henrietta protestingly remarked. A note had come for Jessamy during lunch; she had read it with quickened breath, and conveyed it to the other two slyly. The effect on them all had been disturbing. Bab slipped out for a few moments, and Mrs. Wyndham thought she caught a whisper from her to Phyllis containing the words "telephone," "Tom," and "Ruth." When Bab returned she flitted from room to room as if she could not keep still, and though Phyllis had greater control of her nerves, her answers to remarks were so wide of the mark that Aunt Henrietta commented on it, and her Aunt Wyndham kindly let her alone.

As to Jessamy, her cheeks were burning, her eyes so bright that Aunt Henrietta, scanning her attentively, prescribed: "Six drops of No. 3 aconite, in a half-glass of water, and take one teaspoonful every hour. You are certainly feverish, child," she added. Jessamy's great beauty had made her Aunt Henrietta's favorite from childhood.

At half-past four, just as Aunt Henrietta was rolling up her work preparatory to taking tea before setting out homeward,—“You live at such an unearthly distance from civilization,” she said, as reproachfully as though the Wyndhams were selfishly pursuing their own pleasure in going uptown for low rent,—just at half-past four the bell rang, and Mrs. Wyndham met at the door Robert Lane, looking so excited, entering with such a quick step and flashing eyes, that he brought an electric atmosphere with him.

"What has happened to you, Mr. Lane?" asked Mrs. Wyndham, rising to welcome him. "You know my aunt, Mrs. Hewlett? You look as though some one had made you heir to a fortune."

"Not a bad guess, Mrs. Wyndham," said Robert, taking the extended hand. "I have as good news as that to tell you; I honestly believe I like it better than a fortune for myself."

"Then it is all right? He has come to terms?" cried Bab, while Jessamy and Phyllis, knowing the answer before it was given, dropped, quite pale, on the sofa, their arms holding each other tight.

"All right, little lady; the check is here," cried Robert, jubilantly slapping himself on the breast.

Mrs. Wyndham turned pale; even Aunt Henrietta began to tremble.

"May we know what you are talking about, young man?" she said sternly. "Evidently the girls are in your counsels."

"My dear Mrs. Wyndham," Robert began, "it is rather a long story; the beginning dates from the winter before last, when I was first graduated from the law school, and had a desk in Mr. Abbott's outer office."

At the mention of that fateful name, Mrs. Wyndham sat erect, clasping tight the arms of her chair. "Mr. Abbott!" she whispered.

"Precisely; the Abbott who robbed you," said Robert, nodding emphatically. "At the time I was frequently asked to witness his signature to papers; among others there were three transfer deeds. The dates of those deeds I remember, owing to circumstances, and I saw enough of their contents to know they transferred a portion of Abbott's property to his wife. The first was signed on my own birthday, December 7; the second on January 3, the birthday of a chum of mine, on which we always dine together; the third on the eve of Washington's birthday, and I witnessed it with my coat on, ready to start out of town for the holiday—so I was prepared to swear to all three dates with absolute certainty. There were many things then which led me to suspect Mr. Abbott did not quite come up to one's idea of an honest man, and the following spring I heard of the failure of the Wyndham Iron Works, and that you had lost everything, while Abbott still prospered. Then I thought hard, and as a result of cogitating I went to Mr. Hurd and told him about those papers I had witnessed, and how that rascal had put property out of his hands when the company was already involved. Mr. Hurd jumped at the information. 'Young man,' he said, 'you may be the very witness we need to establish what we all knew, but could not prove.' Then Mrs. Van Alyn let me meet Miss Jessamy, and she gave me information we lacked. Mr. Hurd did not have to disturb you, having your power of attorney, and they thought it better not to tell you about it until they were sure of success. Well, there were undoubtedly other transfers made besides those I witnessed, but those were all we could prove; still, they amounted to forty thousand dollars. We convinced Abbott we could prove that much rascality, and that if he did n't disgorge he would be sued, and made to give up not only that, but costs and reputation—what he has of it! The old scamp hated the alternative, but he's too sharp not to know it was the cheapest thing he could do, so he gave Mr. Hurd his check for forty thousand,—it's certified,—and as a reward for the little assistance I've been, Mr. Hurd let me bring it up to you.

"Mrs. Wyndham, here is a check for forty

thousand dollars, and if you are as glad about it as I am, you are a happy woman."

So saying, and with a decided choke in his voice, Robert laid the certified check on Mrs. Wyndham's knee, and dropped quietly back in his chair.

Not a sound broke the stillness with which all present had listened to the long story. Then Aunt Henrietta electrified the company. Without a word, she arose to her full stately height, walked deliberately over to where Robert sat, put both arms around him, and kissed him soundly, with a kiss that resounded. "You are a second Daniel Webster," she said, and solemnly resumed her seat.

Nothing better could have happened; Aunt Henrietta had relieved the tension of a moment that was in danger of becoming overstrained. Following her aunt's example, though with a difference, Mrs. Wyndham took both of Robert's hands, tears of joy running down her cheeks. "I can't thank you, my dear," she said simply. "I know you are as glad as we are. But I shall never, never forget that we owe it to you that this portion of our property is restored. And to us, having been taught the lesson of economy so sharply, forty thousand dollars will be a far larger sum than it once would have seemed."

Jessamy, Phyllis, and Bab were crying, but their faces were flushed with joy, and they were smiling as they wept. "Oh, there's Tom!" cried Bab, running to the door to let him in, as she always did on hearing his peculiar signal.

"Hallo, Bob, old man; I see you've got it. Bab telephoned me," cried Tom, the instant he saw the April faces. "Talk about special providences, was n't it about the neatest bit of good fortune that you should have witnessed those deeds? I tell you, Mother Wyndham, I'm tremendously glad! Now it's over, and you know the whole story, I don't mind acknowledging that my engagement to Bab depended on the recovery of that money; if it had n't been captured I should have broken it off—I would n't have married a girl without a little fortune."

"She has n't married you yet, sir, that girl-with-a-fortune, so you'd better not be too sure of her. I may take my share of the forty thousand and purchase a little Frenchman with

a little French title," said Bab, saucily — so saucily that Aunt Henrietta said severely:

"Barbara, such jests are not seemly."

Once more the bell rang, and Ruth dashed in like a whirlwind, and seized the entire family in her arms at once, apparently, so swift were her motions. "Oh, dear, dear girls, I *am* so glad!" she cried. "When you telephoned, Bab, I was out; but the moment I came in I turned right around and started over here. I could n't be more gladder if it were my own money."

"Nor more mixed up in your comparatives," laughed Bab, returning Ruth's hug with vehemence. "I knew you 'd be glad; you 're that kind. You sympathized with our trouble, but it counts for even more to be glad of our joy. You are a trump, Miss Wells, and I call our lawyer, Mr. Lane, to witness I said so."

"Are you going to move, or do anything different now?" asked Ruth.

"Not we," said Jessamy. "This was our Land of Canaan, and we will not desert the dear little place because our income is doubled."

"We never could love any other little place so well," said Phyllis. "It is so much our very own home. I 'm not sure, even, that I regret our dear old home now. It will be very nice to feel that our shoes no longer pinch; that will satisfy me."

"And still nicer, literally, to be able to get shoes that don't pinch whenever ours are shabby. My idea of happiness is not wealth, but just enough to feel luxurious in having necessities plentifully. I shall buy half a dozen gloves and three pairs of shoes the moment madrina cashes that check," said Bab, whose harmless vanity was her pretty hands and feet.

"I don't think I can get beyond rejoicing to know that each of the girls now can have a little fortune when I am no longer with them," said Mrs. Wyndham.

She looked dangerously near tears, and Tom had an inspiration.

"Put that check on the floor, right in the middle," he cried. "Now, hands all round. Come on, Mrs. Hewlett." And the bad boy forcibly pulled Aunt Henrietta from her dignified seat. "'Ain't I glad I 'm out of the wilderness, out of the wilderness, out of the wilderness,'" he sang; and the girls and Robert joined in breathlessly, laughing and dancing joyfully as they sang.

Round and round the check reposing on the floor they danced, Nixie and Trucie, who were the best of friends, capering outside the circle, and regarding the whole thing as done for their personal entertainment.

In a few moments Mrs. Wyndham gasped out appeals for mercy, and the Indian dance of triumph ended.

"Now we can settle down to peaceful happiness," said Jessamy, fanning herself.

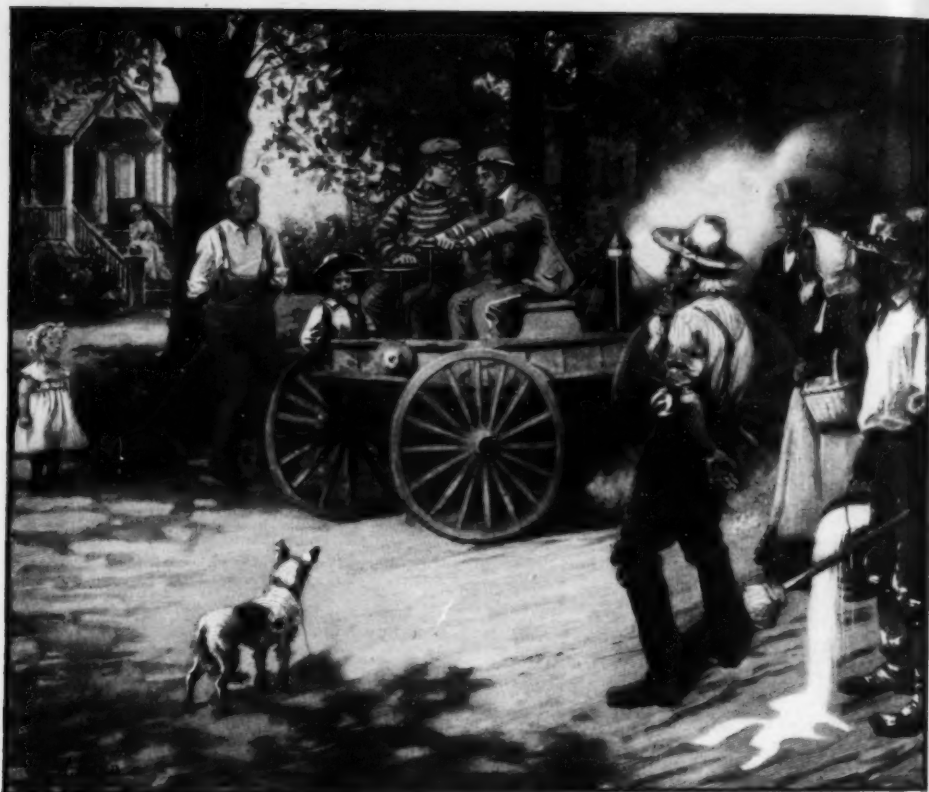
"A little fortune, and our stories and pictures to make it bigger, dear Princess—why, we are going to be wealthy!" said Phyllis, throwing her arms around Jessamy in an aftermath of delight.

Bab encircled them both impartially, standing on tiptoe to do it.

"The troubles of the Wyndham girls are over," she said. "They are the happiest three in the world, because 'Home-keeping hearts are happiest,' you know, and

"East or West, Home is Best!"





"EVERYBODY WAS WAITING IN ALMOST BREATHLESS INTEREST TO SEE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN." (SEE PAGE 251.)

## SAM BENSON'S AUTOMOBILE.

BY FRANK S. BALLARD.

SAM BENSON must have been what you sometimes hear people call a mechanical genius. Anyway, machinery had always possessed a powerful fascination for Sam, and he exhibited a truly remarkable precocity in rigging up contrivances that would go or had motion in them.

He gave early evidence of the bent of his mind by using for making machines empty thread-spools and bobbins, set on whittled wooden axles, connected by beltings of twine, and made to revolve by the use of weights or cast-off clockwork.

Later, the brook which ran through the meadow in the rear of his father's barn was

discovered by Sam as a source of power. A dam was built, and a good-sized overshot water-wheel set up, from which power was carried to the barn by means of a small rope belting, and a jig-saw and small grindstone could be run by this power; this had proved to be a really practical labor-saving contrivance.

And all the neighbors knew about Sam's windmill. He had built a mammoth windmill, and had set it up and attached it to the pump in his father's yard; and it would pump all right, too, when the wind blew; for one night when it was calm Sam neglected to detach the connections between the pump-handle and the wind-



mill, and a good breeze springing up during the evening, the mill turned the whole night long and pumped the well dry; the door-yard was flooded, and the Bensons had to lug water from the neighbors' houses for the next two weeks.

During a recent summer a pushing patent-medicine firm sent out a man in an automobile. He traveled from town to town in the machine, distributing the advertising matter, and in the course of time arrived in the country village where Sam Benson lived.

None of the villagers had ever seen one of the odd-appearing horseless carriages, and many had not even heard of the existence of such a thing. It created no end of talk and wonder among the people, and the circus itself would have taken second place in public interest if it had arrived in the village while the man with the automobile was there.

As for Sam Benson, he could n't get a good night's sleep, owing to the train of thought the automobile aroused in his inventive brain. He spent almost every hour the automobile man was in town in looking over the machine and studying the different parts of its mechanism. He got more rides on it than any one else, asked questions until the man grew weary of answering him, and by the time it had departed Sam had a first-rate idea of what made an automobile go, and of how it was put together.

About a month after the departure of the automobile, it was reported among the boys in the village that Sam Benson was up to something unusually mysterious in his father's carriage-house. Sam had purposely said not a word to anybody about what he was doing, but finally the secret leaked out. He had taken his chum, Joe Wilbur, into his confidence, and they, with the village blacksmith's help, were building an automobile.

The one thing that made it possible for Sam to build something that would go after the manner of an automobile was this: A summer boarder in the village had had a gasoline-launch that he used on the river, which ran close by the village. One day he ran the launch on the rocks and smashed it all up; nothing was left of it that was good for much except the gasoline-motor, which he sold cheap to a village resident. Later it happened that the man who bought

the motor owed Sam's father a debt which he could n't collect, and in time Sam's father took the motor, the only thing he could get hold of to satisfy the debt; thus the motor came into Mr. Benson's hands.

Very soon the motor passed into Sam's possession, and, as can be imagined, was a thing of intense joy to him. He had it fired up, and ran it time and again, but had not put it to any special use up to the time the automobile idea struck him. Now it was going to furnish the motive power for his automobile.

Sam and Joe got hold of a light platform-wagon that had seen better days, but which still possessed a tolerably stout frame and four very good wheels.

With the blacksmith's aid, they dropped four iron hangers down from the body of the wagon, and to these a second platform was attached. On the lower platform the gasoline-motor, which, by the way, was a powerful affair, was firmly fastened.

The back wheels of the wagon were put on a solid axle that turned with the wheels, and on this axle a cog-wheel was set. On the power shaft of the motor another cog-wheel was set, and the two cogs were connected by a chain-gearing.

The front axle of the wagon was attached to an upright bar, with a horizontal bar put on top, so the machine could be steered, and two long iron rods, with little wheels on top, connected with the steam-valve and reverse mechanism of the motor.

Sam's ingenuity suggested all these things; the blacksmith got out the ironwork under his directions. They had to send away for the chain-gearing, and this and other things cost considerable, and Sam had to sell off about thirty of his hens to pay his share of expenses.

Unfortunately for Sam, his knowledge of mechanics was not a trained one. He knew nothing about the rules or mathematics of the science, and he did n't know whether the relative size of the cog-wheels on the motor and the wagon-axle would produce a high speed or low speed, and he did n't care overmuch, either; all he wanted was to have the thing go, and it went all right, as after events proved.

It took just about a month to build the auto-

mobile, and when it was finished it was a most mysterious and fearful-looking affair. No one ever saw anything that looked like it before, and there are several now who never want to see anything like it again.

On the eventful day of the trial the boys had had steam up in the automobile all the morning. They had seen the thing move back and forth over the carriage-house floor, satisfying them that it would go; they had tried the steering-gear, the reverse lever, and everything seemed to work all right and to give promise of a great success.

Soon after dinner, Sam went out in front of the house and looked up and down the road; he wanted to get the automobile out and started without a lot of people gathering round. No one was in sight, and a minute later he and Joe backed the machine out of the carriage-house and pushed it up the driveway out into the road. In the front windows of the house was every member of the Benson family, their faces wreathed in broad smiles of amusement.

When they got into the road Sam happened to drop a monkey-wrench down into an awkward spot in the machinery, and they had to stop and fish it out. While they were doing this, Mrs. Potter, who lived next door, happened to look out of her window.

"Well, for the land's sake, Ira, do come here!" she exclaimed. "What on earth has that Benson boy got out there in the road?"

Mr. Potter looked out of the window.

"Well, I swan," he said, "ef that boy don't beat the Dutch!"

"It 's on fire, ain't it?" said Mrs. Potter, who saw the steam curling up from underneath. But Mr. Potter had gone for his hat, and was starting out to see what the contrivance was.

Just then a team came along with three men in it, and, of course, they stopped; various neighbors began appearing at their doorways, and by the time Sam had recovered the monkey-wrench, and made a few necessary adjustments on the machine, there was a crowd of a dozen or fifteen people around him—just what Sam had been trying to avoid.

Sam kept silent or answered questions in regard to the machine in monosyllables, and tried to appear very unconcerned and absorbed in what he was doing. But he was really in a

most self-conscious condition, and both he and Joe were so nervous and excited that they were very awkward with their fingers in trying to arrange things.

Finally they both climbed to the seat on the machine. There was an impressive silence, everybody waiting in almost breathless interest to see what would happen.

Joe gripped the steering-bar, and Sam cautiously opened the steam-valve. There was no response. He opened it a little wider; there was a loud *sis-sis* underneath, and the back wheels of the machine spun round, throwing a shower of dirt on those behind.

Every one in range was hit by the dirt; one man got a wad in his eye and had to have somebody look into it; two little girls had white dresses spattered; and what with the flying dirt and hissing steam, everybody edged off to a respectful distance.

"Set your seat farther back, Sammy, so 's to git your weight more over the back wheels," some one shouted. This was good advice, and Sam and Joe got off and moved the seat back a little; then they got on and tried it again.

This time the machine made a sudden jump forward. One of the front wheels struck a stone, twisting the steering-bar almost out of Joe's hands; the machine made a swoop through the shallow ditch at the roadside, climbed a low terrace in front of the Williams' house, carried away four or five feet of a light lath fence around a tulip-bed, went through the tulips, and brought up with one wheel upon the first step of the door-steps.

The bystanders followed, some at a trot, and everybody laughing so they could hardly speak. They all were pleased except Sam and Joe and the woman who owned the tulips. She ran to the front door, and when she saw the tulip-bed she began to rate the boys unmercifully. She kept it up though Sam and Joe apologized and offered to pay her; but finally the woman became so interested in what was going on, she forgot to grumble, and sat down on the door-steps to watch.

The boys pulled the machine back into the road and looked it over very carefully. Everything seemed to be all right about it, and after the examination again they got up on the seat.

In the excitement the reverse lever of the machine had been turned, and the machine was loaded to go backward; but nobody knew this, and the spectators all were lined up in the rear of the machine as the safest place to be.

Again Sam turned on the steam, and this time the machine made a quick, unexpected dash to the rear. The crowd stampeded right and left, and everybody got out of the way except "Fatty Childs," the postmaster's boy, who was only fourteen and weighed two hundred pounds. The machine struck Fatty amidships as he turned to flee, knocked him flat, and ran over his leg.

The bystanders roared as the unwieldy fat boy scrambled to his feet in a frantic effort to escape the scalding steam that squirted in his direction. He was n't hurt much, and limped away, while Sam brought the machine to a standstill and carefully turned the reverse lever.

Once again they made a start, and this time they got away without mishap, and went sailing up the street toward the business part of the village at a good rate of speed, the small boys cheering and chasing on behind.

It was a proud moment in Sam's life. How the people did stare! And it was curious to see the changes on their faces when they saw the machine coming — surprise, wonder, a look as though they could n't believe their own eyes, and then, as they made out what it was, an expression of immense amusement.

People could be seen running out of their door-yards as the machine passed by, and beckoning to others to come and see. It is safe to say that Sam's automobile caused more talk in the village that day than anything that had ever happened there.

Leading south out of the village was a long, level piece of road known as the Dorset Street Road, and up this road Joe steered the machine.

"Open her up a little, Sam," said Joe, "and let 's see what she can do."

Sam let on a little more steam, and the machine shot ahead at increased speed. It was exhilarating now, and the breeze caused by the smart pace swept coolly back into the boys' faces.

A little way out on the road the boys gained rapidly on a team which proved to be that of Deacon Calkins. The deacon heard the noise and turned round. Maybe he was n't surprised!

But there were a whole lot of surprises coming to the deacon. When he saw what the vehicle was he stood up in the wagon to look back. Like all the rest, he could n't comprehend at first, and then, as he took in the situation, a broad grin spread over his features.

The boys rapidly caught up to him, and the deacon was shouting something at them as he pulled one side to let them pass; but he had n't reckoned on his horse.

The horse, hearing the unusual noise, turned its head in a nervous fashion, and caught sight of the machine. One look was enough for that horse. Any decent horse would have been scared. It made one jump that nearly snapped the deacon's head off, and then, with the bits in its teeth, tail up and mane flying, it started on a dead run.

Well, the deacon did n't waste any more time looking at that automobile. He gathered up the lines, and you could hear him yell, "Whoa! whoa, boy!" away back in the village. Sam was scared, and started to shut off the steam; but in the excitement he turned it completely on, and the machine shot ahead at a terrific rate. When he tried to turn the rod the opposite way it just twisted round loosely; it had slipped a cog somewhere.

"Shut her off, Sam!" shrieked Joe, getting on his feet in excitement.

"Can't; it 's busted!" yelled Sam.

"Shall I turn the reverse lever?" shouted Joe.

"Don't do it; she 'd blow up!" yelled Sam.

Maybe that home-made automobile did n't go when it got the full force of the power! It simply flew. The deacon's horse was running something like a mile a minute on ahead, but it was a fact that the automobile began to overhaul the runaway horse.

"We 're going to run him down!" yelled Joe, who was clinging to the steering-bar for dear life. "I 'm going to ju-m-m-p!" he jerked out, as the machine struck a stone.

"Don't do it; you 'll be killed. Stick to the machine!" shrieked Sam, as his hat flew off and his hair stood back in the wind.

About an eighth of a mile farther on the road ran down in a steep hill, and just this side of the hill was the entrance to the Moore farm.



"THE DEACON GATHERED UP THE LINES, AND YOU COULD HEAR HIM VELL AWAY BACK IN THE VILLAGE." (SEE PAGE 251.)

"If the gate's open steer her up into Moore's place!" yelled Sam. "If it's shut run her into the fence and jump. Don't go down that hill!"

The machine kept gaining on the galloping horse and the shouting deacon, and if there had been a hundred yards farther to go they would have rammed him from the rear; but just before they were up to him the horse swept by the entrance to the Moore farm, and on down the hill, in spite of the deacon's frantic efforts to turn him.

As the machine came opposite the entrance to the Moore farm, Joe turned the steering-bar; the machine made the curve with two wheels in the air, and shot up the short lane into the farm-yard.

The entrance, fortunately, was up quite a steep incline, which checked the speed of the machine a great deal. In a whirlwind of excitement, the boys were looking for the place where they were going to strike, and never noticed the clothes-line, which, as they went under it, caught them

in the usual spot, under the chin, and mowed them off from the top of the automobile on to the ground.

The machine kept right on—chased a yelping dog with its tail between its legs up on to the back piazza, frightened a girl at the milk-pans into hysterics, and then, making a short turn, swept down a steep incline, and went, bang! right through the light doors of the barn.

There was a whole lot of live stock in the barn, and as the wheels to the automobile still kept spinning by fits and starts, it raised an awful babel of noises in that barn. And every now and then a wild-eyed cow or calf, with, perhaps, a piece of rope dangling from its neck, would make a frantic break out of the broken barn doors, and disappear at a wild gallop that made it look as if it was trying to throw hand-springs, while hens and chickens were fluttering from the windows in all directions.

It seemed a miracle that the boys were not killed outright, but they were not even badly

hurt. Just as they limped up to look into the barn there came a tremendous explosion inside, followed by a final distribution of crazed cattle and screeching poultry. And at this moment the little door in the second story of the barn was kicked violently open, and down off the hay slid a hired man who looked like an escaped lunatic. The man did n't have time to find out whether he was going to fall as the result of his jump. And he had barely touched the ground when a couple of young heifers, propelled by the explosion, shot out of the barn door on the jump; the first one butted the man and knocked him flat, and the second one galloped right over him.

Laugh! How Sam and Joe did laugh, in spite of their tumble and mishap! They had been laughed at all day, and it was their turn now.

But smoke now began to come out of the barn; it was on fire. Probably twenty-five people had chased the runaways up the road, and as these arrived they formed a bucket brigade from the pump, and soon had the fire out.

It cost Sam's father a very pretty sum to settle the damages, besides the loss of the motor,

which had blown up. As for the deacon, he made the hill all right, and his horse soon stopped running on the level road below.



"DOWN OFF THE HAY SLID A HIRED MAN WHO LOOKED LIKE AN ESCAPED LUNATIC."

Machinery still has the same fatal fascination for Sam, and he may make a new automobile, but he's a little chary now about saying anything to others about his plans for inventions.



# "When Laura Goes to Play."

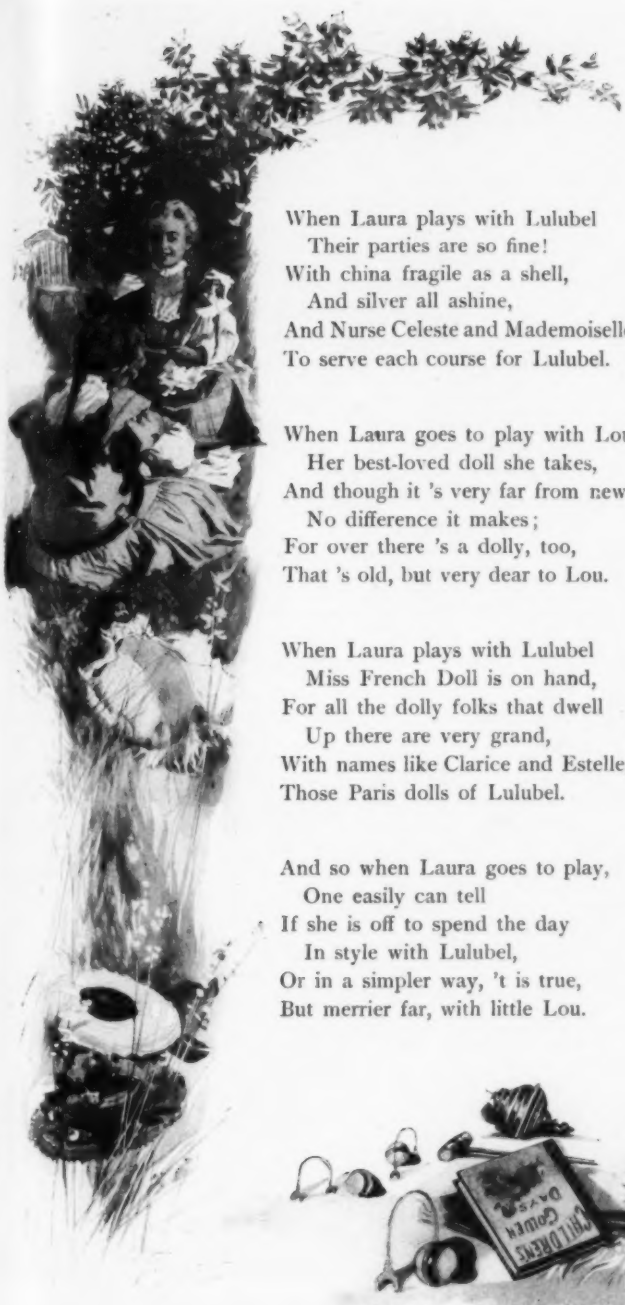
By Rose Mills Powers.

WHEN Laura goes to play with Lou,  
Who lives across the way,  
She wears a gingham frock of blue  
Just made for romp and play;  
And oftentimes her hat 's askew,  
When Laura goes to play with Lou.

When Laura plays with Lulubel,  
Who lives up on the square,  
She has to dress up very well  
And think about her hair.  
It would not do to run pell-mell,  
Up on the square with Lulubel.

When Laura goes to play with Lou  
They picnic on the grass;  
Two cups of milk, a bun or two,  
Is all there is to pass;  
And yet it seems a nice menu  
To Laura, playing there with Lou.





When Laura plays with Lulubel  
Their parties are so fine!  
With china fragile as a shell,  
And silver all ashine,  
And Nurse Celeste and Mademoiselle  
To serve each course for Lulubel.

When Laura goes to play with Lou  
Her best-loved doll she takes,  
And though it 's very far from new,  
No difference it makes;  
For over there 's a dolly, too,  
That 's old, but very dear to Lou.

When Laura plays with Lulubel  
Miss French Doll is on hand,  
For all the dolly folks that dwell  
Up there are very grand,  
With names like Clarice and Estelle,  
Those Paris dolls of Lulubel.

And so when Laura goes to play,  
One easily can tell  
If she is off to spend the day  
In style with Lulubel,  
Or in a simpler way, 't is true,  
But merrier far, with little Lou.





THE HOLY NIGHT, FROM THE PAINTING BY CORREGGIO.

## CORREGGIO'S PICTURE "SANTA NOTTE," OR "HOLY NIGHT."

BY ELLA M. DILLINGHAM.



ABOUT four hundred years ago lived the great painter known to us as Correggio, who took his name from the small town of Correggio, in northern Italy, where he was born, just two years after the discovery of America.

His real name was Antonio Allegri, and as he became famous the name

of his birthplace was added, giving him the title of Antonio Allegri da Correggio. Near the town of Correggio was a somewhat larger town called Reggio; and when the artist Correggio had won renown by his frescoes in Parma and Mantua, he was asked by Alberto Pratonero to paint an oil-picture to adorn the new chapel he had just built, for the glory of his family, in the Church of San Prospero in Reggio. It was for this chapel of the Pratoneri family that the picture called "Holy Night" was painted in 1530, and it remained there in quiet seclusion for many years; but it was too beautiful to be lost in obscurity, and it now adorns the Gallery of Fine Arts in Dresden.

The picture shows the child Jesus in his mother's arms, a soft, beautiful light shining from his face and glorifying the face of Mary as she leans over him.

The scene is in a rude shed, quite open in

the background, where appears Joseph with those humble animals of the field. It is the early morning, as the first faint signs of dawn tinge the hills and sky in the distance; but the important light of the picture is that shining with a heavenly radiance from the Infant resting in his mother's arms as she kneels before a manger holding straw. The face of Mary reflects the glory of her Son as she gazes fondly upon him, undazzled by the brightness from which the young woman on the opposite side screens her eyes by holding up her hand. A sturdy old shepherd looks on in amazement, and raises his hand to his head as if afraid he is not really awake; and a younger shepherd looks up at him as if saying, "It is strange, but too beautiful to frighten any one." Above are joyful angels who have just floated down on a billow of clouds to gaze upon the scene; but they do not bring with them the light upon the clouds: that, too, is a reflection from the Christ Child.

Other artists have attempted to represent this same idea of Christ at his first entrance into this world casting a glory about him, but never so successfully as Correggio, who has sometimes been called "Ariel the Light-bringer" because the light in his pictures is so clear and bright. This "Holy Night" is one of the most beautiful that he ever painted, and though artists sometimes find minor faults in the drawing, they never cease to admire the wonderful glow shining from the heavenly Child who came to this world nineteen hundred years ago.



## BOOKS AND READING.

### THE SPELLING-MATCH.

THERE is no doubt that young folks love a spelling-match, and so many have sent in corrections of the story "Eh Kernel's Sun," printed in the October number, that the awards cannot be made till next month. Not all the versions have yet been examined, but it is already certain that very many correctly spelled versions have been received, so that the prizes must be awarded to the competitors who, age of the writer and neatness of the answers considered, have done best. Many of you failed through the veriest carelessness; but accuracy is difficult!

### A TRAVELING BOOK-LIST.

WE are always glad to hear of new books—or books new to us—that are worth reading; and yet we seldom, except by chance, think of recommending them; that is, we seldom take the trouble to spread the news of a happy find. It would take little time and little effort to write a postal-card or, better, a note to the friends we are sure would enjoy what we have found delightful. A group of young friends could arrange among themselves to keep one another informed of the good reading they come upon. Sometimes men who have been classmates in college agree after graduation to write what are known as "circular" letters. Number One begins by writing to Number Two, giving an account of what he has seen or done. Number Two adds his account of himself, and mails both to Number Three, who adds his own letter, and forwards all to Number Four, and so on back to Number One. It may be that this plan could be made useful in telling about books. Each of the friends who took up the plan could add a title or two, with what remarks occurred to him, and thus a list could be kept upon its travels.

### THAT FOOTBALL TEAM.

FROM Lincoln, Nebraska, a young correspondent suggests members for an imaginary football team to compete with the remarkable collection of worthies named in the November number. He thinks this new team would have a fair chance of scoring even against the other stars:

|                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Right End, Hector.      | Right Half, Theseus.       |
| Right Tackle, Ajax.     | Left Half, Thor.           |
| Right Guard, Odin.      | Full-back, Milton's Satan. |
| Center, Scrimar.        | Substitutes: The Mac-      |
| Left Guard, Polyphemus. | cabees, Castor and         |
| Left Tackle, Briareus.  | Pollux, Sir Launcelot,     |
| Left End, Hereward.     | Olaf, Charlemagne,         |
| Quarter, Harold Hard-   | and Talus.                 |
| raade.                  |                            |

We think this an excellent team, and creditable to its inventor, Mr. Jack Miller, to whom our thanks are due.

A rival—and a girl!—makes up yet another team. It is as follows, except for two slight changes, neither of which weakens the team, we think.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Left End, Alfred the Great.               | Left Half, Ivanhoe.                          |
| Left Tackle, Briareus.                    | Right Half, Powhatan.                        |
| Left Guard, Horatius.                     | Full-back, Roderick Dhu.                     |
| Center, Cœur de Lion.                     | Umpire, Socrates.                            |
| Right Guard, Strong Back (Grimms' Tales). | Referee, Draco.                              |
| Right Tackle, Brian de Bois-Guilbert.     | Head Coach, Napoleon Bonaparte.              |
| Right End, Douglas.                       | Line-keeper, Lafayette.                      |
| Quarter, Alexander the Great.             | Time-keeper, Diogenes.                       |
|   | Physician, "No one—for they never get hurt!" |

There are still plenty of giants! See Brewer's "Dictionary of Phrase and Fable," new edition (1900), page 514.

### MOHAMMED AND THE MOUNTAIN.

A YOUNG inquirer asks for the origin of the saying: "If Mohammed will not go to the mountain, the mountain must go to Mohammed." We have usually seen this stated the other way. In the same edition of the "Phrase and Fable" there is an explanation of the saying on page 865, but no authority is given.

### "HISTORY OF A NUT-CRACKER."

A LETTER, comes from England asking for information about Alexandre Dumas's "Histoire d'un Casse-noisette." We must refer the inquiry to our readers. We remember an English translation of the story, called "The Nut-cracker of Nuremberg," but do not find the entry in the Publishers' Catalogue. Is the book to be found in either French or English?



**SOME QUAIN  
INSCRIPTIONS.**

THE friend who sent us an early copy of "Goody Two-shoes" writes to this department about a boy's inscriptions in his Bible in 1718:

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: In looking over an English Bible recently sent me from London, I have found several verses, evidently written by a boy, which I think may interest your boys and girls. The Bible was published in London in 1603. The binding has brass corners, and the arms of James I. are on both sides. The writing is plain, but "John" shows he had many struggles before he had finished his verses. I have copied the form and capitals, or want of capitals, but, unfortunately, cannot give you the lettering.

On the back of the title he has written:

"John Sims His Book amen  
God Give him Grace to run  
that race that heaven may  
be his dwelling Place  
1718"

On the back of the title of the New Testament there is the following:

"John Sims His Book  
amen God Give him Grace to Look  
therein & when y bell for him doth tole  
Lord Jesus Christ receiv his soul"

and

"John Sims Is my  
name England is my nation  
Sarum is my dwelling place  
Christ is my  
Salvation  
1718"

Hoping this will interest you, I am,  
Yours truly,  
A. J. PARSONS.

**TWO MORE  
QUESTIONS.**

AN inquirer writes from Dinard, France, an appeal for the names of books about Captain Kidd. ST. NICHOLAS told something of Kidd's career in Mr. Stockton's "Pirates and Buccaneers of Our Coast." Is there any available account of this famous treasure-hider—that is, any worth reading?

Another seeker after knowledge wishes to find the quotation:

One good idea but known to be thine own  
Is better than a thousand gleaned from fields by  
others sown.

**BOOKS IN THE  
LIBRARY.**

THE plan suggested by this young correspondent has its good points, but—is n't his bookcase rather neat and useful than interesting or pic-

turesque? Is n't it a pity not to see the books themselves? Such a library reminds one of a party where all the guests are in dominoes and masks!

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I want to tell you about my library. I have nearly one hundred books which I keep in a bookcase of my own. To keep the covers from getting soiled I covered them with plain brown wrapping-paper, which I bought at the stationery store for about a half-cent or a cent a sheet.

When I had them covered it was very hard to find any book, as they were all alike. So I went to a printer's and got one hundred plain white visiting-cards for fifteen cents.

I took these and wrote the name of a book on each one and gave it a number. Then I wrote the number on the book, and arranged the cards in order according to the first letter. In this way I can find any book I want very quickly.

Yours very truly,

CHESTER C. JERSEY.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: In one issue of the ST. NICHOLAS you ask for a list of the best of the juvenile books that have appeared during the last two or three years. I send you a list of twenty good books for boys and girls that have appeared during 1897-1901. I did not dash them off on the moment, but thought a good while before compiling this list. I think that the twenty books that follow this letter are the best of the mass of books that have been published during the last three years. I would have liked to include the "Story of Barnaby Lee," but as that has n't come out in book form, I could n't do it. "The Wouldbegoods" appeared in September and is just fine. Here is the list:

|                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| The Brownies Abroad,       | man, Jesse Lynch Wil-      |
| Palmer Cox.                | liams.                     |
| The Dozen from Lakerim,    | The Fugitive, John R.      |
| Rupert Hughes.             | Spears.                    |
| Quicksilver Sue, Laura E.  | The Land of the Long       |
| Richards.                  | Night, Paul B. Du          |
| The Story of Betty, Caro-  | Chaillu.                   |
| lyn Wells.                 | The Wouldbegoods, E.       |
| Lobo, Rag, and Vixen,      | Nesbit.                    |
| Ernest Seton-Thompson.     | A Jersey Boy in the Rev-   |
| Yankee Enchantments, C.    | olution, E. T. Tomlin-     |
| B. Loomis.                 | son.                       |
| Trinity Bells, Amelia E.   | Elsie in the South, Martha |
| Barr.                      | Finley.                    |
| Dorothy Deane, Ellen Ol-   | We Win, H. E. Hamblen.     |
| ney Kirk.                  | Forward, March! Kirk       |
| Dorothy and her Friends,   | Munroe.                    |
| Ellen Olney Kirk.          | Master Skylark, John Ben-  |
| The House with Sixty       | nett.                      |
| Closets, Frank S. Child.   | The Junior Cup, Allen      |
| The Adventures of a Fresh- | French.                    |

They are all good books, and are worthy of consideration. Yours truly,

WILLIAM KERNAN DART (age 16).



## WHAT THE MISTLETOE DID.

A PRETTY doll in a stocking  
hung,  
While near her a soldier-  
doll bravely swung,  
When, lo! the timepiece  
struck twelve o'clock,  
And gave the mistletoe  
quite a shock.  
Then the startled doll  
heard the soldier say:  
"All right, little neighbor!  
It 's Christmas Day."

*Joel Stacy.*

## THE STORY OF BARNABY LEE.

BY JOHN BENNETT.

(Author of "Master Skylark.")

[This story was begun in the November, 1900, number.]

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

#### THE LAST DAYS.

ON Saturday morning, August 31, 1664, Colonel Richard Nicolls sent his last imperious summons for the surrender of New Amsterdam, citadel and town. Stuyvesant once more replied that he had no right to demand it, and again the blunt English commander rejoined: "The right does not concern me a tittle; I was sent hither to take New Amsterdam, and I am going to take it."

"I will protect and defend the city to the last extremity," responded the Director-General.

"Come easy, come hard," returned Richard Nicolls, "I shall take New Amsterdam. I am weary of this parleying. I have offered terms to the city, and if they are not accepted, I hold myself clear of responsibility for whatever may ensue. At the end of twenty-four hours I shall move upon the town, by land and sea; it behooves you to make up your minds."

When this imperious message was heard in New Amsterdam, men, women, and children flocked to the Director-General's door, beseeching him that he would submit; but his only answer to them was, "I would rather be carried out dead!" "Then give us the terms, or, upon our souls, we will surrender anyway!" they cried.

To avoid the threatened mutiny against his authority, which would leave him neither dignity nor honor to stand upon, the Director-General yielded to the demand for the English terms, and Governor Winthrop's letter, which he had torn into shreds, was cunningly pieced together, copied in English, transcribed into Dutch, and despatched to the burgo-meisters.

Then Stuyvesant sued for an armistice, still vainly and vaguely hoping for impossible relief, and longing still for some compromise compatible with honor. But Nicolls would treat for nothing but the surrender of the town. "I was sent to take New Amsterdam," he answered, "and I am coming to take it. Have done with the goose-quill and ink-pot; they are no arms for a gentleman-soldier." Then he sent two ships above the town, while the rest remained below, so that the town was between two fires: "To-morrow," said he to Stuyvesant, "I will speak with you in Manhattan."

"Friends will be welcome," replied Stuyvesant, "if they come in a friendly manner."

"It rests with you," rejoined Nicolls, "whether the manner be friendlike or foemanlike. I shall come with my ships and my soldiers. Raise the white flag of peace on your fortress; then something may be considered."

At this the blood of the unwarlike burghers turned into curds and whey. "Surrender!" they cried. "Surrender!"

Stuyvesant looked upon them in burning indignation. "If I surrender this city," he said, "wherein am I justified?"

"Will ye be justified in our ruin?" they cried, "in seeing our city taken and sacked, our warehouses burned, our goods wasted, our homes pillaged and robbed? Is this your justification? Surrender! Surrender!" they implored. But he would not surrender.

"They will tear the fort into ruins!" they cried.

"Then we will defend it from the ruins. I tell you once and for all," said he, "I will not surrender."

"Do not oppose the will of God! If you resist we all shall perish."

"Then we shall perish," he returned, "as is the will of God."

Then the Stad Huis bell began to ring, and

the people to assemble, and straightway every man ceased work upon the fortifications. There was a tumult in the market-place, stones were thrown over the fort-walls, and there was a meeting of the burghers in the Stad Huis square, led by Dirck Phillipse, the carpenter. "Shall we stand here idle in the streets," they cried, "and see the town made a shambles, our children murdered, our parents slain, our property in flames, all for the sake of a fool's honor? To resist is hopeless, defense impossible; although we might protect ourselves for a horrible day or two, there is no relief to be hoped for; we shall be buried in one long trench!" Then they cursed the West India Company, the Chamber of Deputies, and the Lords States-General of Holland, who had left them in such straits, and raised a public outcry against the Director-General. "Be not so obstinate!" they roared. "Expose us not so in vain!" and with that they reviled him in the streets.

But, obstinate and passionate, Peter Stuyvesant stood to his word. "I tell you, I am the master here, and I will fight to the last!" he said.

Then his wrath broke out upon them in a storm of indignation. "Ye miserable tradesmen, who left this ship of state to steer herself while you went catching conies, this is the pass you have brought us to with your despicable trading. Trade? and a curse upon it! It hath made cowards of you all, unworthy the name of Dutchmen; it hath sucked the courage out of your hearts as a sponge sucks water. Duty and honor stir you not; you are anything for profit; the rattle of the guilder-sack is the only drum ye hear. Shame, and shame upon you all! ye would change your faith for safety's sake and turn your coats for a penny, like a mill that setteth its sail to any wind which offers to grind its grain!" As he came through the streets from the Stad Huis the crowd made way for him as a throng of gagging barn-yard fowls would make way for an eagle; for, though they hated him, they feared him, and none dared to face his scorn; and though they reviled him behind his back, to his face they honored him.

That night, at midnight, Martin Van Leer, with a small flyboat, the "Mole," stole out through the waters of Hell Gate to the sea with

the last despairing message of Peter Stuyvesant to the Lords of the Netherlands: "We called upon you, but ye heard us not, and now it is too late; the enemy is upon us!" It was his last official message as Director-General. That night the vessels of the English fleet warped up nearer to the town, and as the lights came on and on, and the sound of oars drifted like a far pulse over the water, in New Amsterdam was madness and the agony of despair.

The curfew rang at nine o'clock, but nobody left the streets, and nobody put his candles out, so that the windows stared bright on the darkness. The night-watch wandered here and there, with unlit lanterns and dragging staves, dafly calling the passing hours; but nobody listened to them. Figures of men and children went hurriedly to and fro; now and then hoarse shouts were heard from trouble in the streets; for both citizens and soldiers were drinking heavily, tempers had grown uncertain, and there was frequent fighting and crying for the watch; but no one had authority, the watch was demoralized and huddled in the corners like a flock of bewildered sheep.

In the open doors men stood, cleaning matchlocks, swords, and pikes, and some with unloaded pistols were running from house to house, begging piteously as they went for a charge or two of gunpowder. The cry everywhere was, "Powder! powder, in Heaven's name, or we all are lost and murdered!" but not a grain of powder came to answer their appeals.

At two o'clock a storm came up across the southwest, with rolling masses of livid cloud heaped like battlements height on height, and with heavy thunder the rain poured down in sheets across the town. Men made no account of it, but with smoking torches ran splashing through the great pools that flooded the streets. Barnaby watched them as they ran, with their pallid faces, hollow cheeks, and staring eyes, coming here and there swiftly through the wet red light, distraught, like creatures driven from their holes at night by the falling of a tree. The children were crying everywhere; everything seemed strange and unreal; restless activity never ceased nor lessened all night long. The cocks crowed; the hounds howled dismally in the kennels; the cattle bel-

lowed in the stables. All the town was in disorder; each was begging for assistance, none was lending the slightest aid; all alike were utterly helpless, all alike utterly frenzied. In the fort alone was order; there each man knew his duty. The cannoneers worked on the ramparts all night long in the sweat of their brows; they earned their bread, though there was none with which to repay their toil. The men fell down like dogs and slept in the grass of the battlement-corners, under the benches, by the walls, anywhere for a moment. "Ach, Gott! we must sleep," they said. "We cannot work away. We will fight; but let us sleep a little with one eye." And none of them watched any more at all, for it was a waste of time. They wrought all night without ceasing, until they staggered with weariness, and some fell asleep as they stood bolt upright in their places on the wall; but, being soldiers, they endured. It was only toward daybreak, when men were tired out, that the uproar in the city ceased. In the half light, half darkness of the stormy dawn, silence fell upon the world, and wandering voices in the lanes grew mysterious and strange. The night seemed to lurk and crouch in the angles of the walls. Then at last came day.

The English fleet was all astir, and the English camps were rousing. The beating of drums, the screaming of trumpets, the shrill, high calls of the sailormen, and the hoarser, heavy shouting of the soldiery as the troops formed, marched, and countermarched on the shores to the south of Brooklyn, came on the wind like the distant sound of a battle in a valley, where one may listen on the hills to the sound of an unseen conflict, beyond sight of the strife, yet with a choke in the throat as one hears the dire uproar.

The camps of the English were stirring before full dawn had come. Then the swift sun sprang up across the Long Island hills and shone brightly on the bivouac along the water's edge. There were few tents; the most of the men had slept on the open ground. The pale smoke was still rising from their half-extinguished camp-fires, and the drums were beating up and down; it was seen that their company was gathering by Jan the Sailor's house.

With every passing moment the stir grew more and more. Steel caps and pikes were sparkling through the pale steam arising from the saturated array; fluttering banners began to rise; horsemen by ones, twos, and threes went galloping from camp to camp. Gleaming in the sunlight, a long, irregular line of steel and banners came slipping over the sand-hills and among the green woods, from Gravesend north to the ferry where boats were waiting.

In the city was a tumult; it was every man for himself, and nobody helped the weak. The gables of the houses were black with staring men. The wind blew through the open doors, and no one cooked or ate their breakfast. The cattle bawled in the cow-sheds hungrily and in vain; nobody harkened to them; nobody counted the time.

Barnaby had not slept all night; if any one had slept, excepting the tired soldiers, his heart was of stone or leather. Before the day broke through the dazzling sky the lad had been up and doing; so, too, had Dorothy. Her face was pale, with two red spots burning on her cheek-bones; her eyes were dry and bright.

"The English fleet is moving, lad," she said as she hurried to Barnaby's side. "They will engage with the fort, beyond a doubt. The burghers declare that they will not fight; but the Governor saith that he will, and the soldiers affirm that they will fire, if they fall at the first broadside. The cannoneers are ordered to shoot as soon as the English frigates pass before the fort. The English have taken the 'White Bear,' that was lying below the harbor, and have filled her full of soldiers to aid in the land attack. Mynheer De Becker hath gone to beg that they will wait a little. Dost think that he may prevail?"

Barnaby simply shook his head and turned his face away.

Early in the afternoon Mynheer De Becker returned. With him were Mynheer Van Ruyter, the Colonial Secretary, Cornelis Steenwyck, the Mayor, in his silver-buckled gown, and Jean Cousseau, the High Reeve, with a long clay pipe in his mouth. There was a white flag still in the bow of their pinnace; it hung down wearily, and the High Reeve's pipe was full of ashes. The English would treat of nothing but

surrender. There was nothing more that the Dutch could do but await their destiny.

Stuyvesant now manumitted his slaves, that in case he should be slain and the city fall they might be free, not bond: Ascento Angola, Christopher, Santone, and Pieter Criolie, Lewis Guinea, Minnis the Thin-lipped, and Solomon Criolie; there were also three negro women, Minna, Antje, and Floris, the last a slim, tall Kongo girl with a silver ring in her nose.

"They are coming!" called the gunner. "They are coming!" said the soldiers. The bell on the church in the fort rang out for an instant wildly. Then all was still, and the ships of the British squadron came majestically on.

The frigates had their sails all set to the last white stretch of canvas; their guns were all upon one side, and their double decks were filled. Towering darkly fore and aft, topheavy, over-gunned, sunken deep with the weight of their cannon, the black mouths of their lower guns were scarcely three feet from the water-line. The rims of the lower ports were wet with the lifting of the waves, and now and then a dark gun dipped its black throat full of spray and dribbled its lip along the sea like the muzzle of a bull. Sullen, sluggish, towering, rolling before the wind, a pale froth rippling across their prows and a bubbling wake behind them, across the green and silver bay the British squadron drove forward to the attack.

Within the fort had fallen a silence like that of death. On the wall between two gabions the Director-General stood. He had attired himself in his very best, as a man who goes into a king's presence; his fine linen collar fell broadly across his velvet coat, and the laces at his strong, round wrists were blown about his determined fingers. Lengths of good match had been issued to all the gunner's men. They lighted them at the charcoal-brazier glowing in the bastion, and took their places, some flushed, some pale and with set lips, as temperament fell, but all determined to stand to their guns and to do their duty or die. On the southwest bastion stood Jan Reyndertsen, beside the Director-General, and with a red-hot touching-iron in his hand. Twenty cannon were all he had; not all bore on the fleet. Ninety-four guns peered gloomily from the ports of the English ships.



The Director-General looked at the flags at the prows of the English frigates. He could see the seamen's faces as they peered above the bulwarks. He laid his hand on the gunner's arm. "Ready, Jan!" he said.

At the prows of the ships the English jack upon its yellow staff looked like a gleaming patch of blood against the yellow sails. The crews were at their quarters; troops were in the waists of the vessels; powder-boys with buckets were darting about the decks. Suddenly across the bay came the sharp roll of a drum. Two ships had passed the limit and were opposite the guns. The master gunner stooped and trained his heavy brazen cannon.

"Make ready!" said Stuyvesant, hoarsely.

"Ready, mynheer," said the gunner.

The captains of the soldiers upon the decks of the vessels could be clearly discerned through the dazzling light. "Ready!" said Stuyvesant, raising his hand.

At this instant the little dominie who taught the Latin school, with his son, who also taught with him, came running up the rampart. "Your Excellency, stay!" he cried. "Stay yet, your Excellency!" His hair was long and white, and his face was old and seamed with care, but mild, sweet, and full of pity. "Peter Stuyvesant," he said as he came to the top of the wall, "as ye stand before your God, look thou here!" and he waved his hand behind him.

But Stuyvesant looked at the frigates and his face was black with anger. "Trouble me not!" he said bitterly. "Art ready there, Reyndertsen?"

"Yea, I am ready," said Reyndertsen, and raised the match.

The little dominie caught the gunner's arm. "In God's name, hold!" he panted. "Let be; I must fire!" cried Reyndertsen, and wrestled to be free. The red sparks flew here and there from the match. The little dominie's hat fell off, his loosed hair blew about his eyes. "Thou fool, let me go!" cried the gunner, and struck him across the face. The younger dominie caught Stuyvesant's signal hand as his father staggered back. "Oh, mynheer, mynheer!" he cried, "remember the women and the children! Their lives are lying in the hollow of thine hand, and in God's judgment thou shalt answer for

what thou hast done with them here this day. Remember the women and the children!"

"The women and the children?" said the Director-General, stupidly.

"Ay; look thou, Peter Stuyvesant!" exclaimed the little gray dominie, and pointed with his trembling hand.

Face on face was huddled in the narrow covertway that lay between the fort-wall and the half-encompassing houses — faces that were wild with fright, lips turned ashy gray: mothers leaning tremblingly on the shoulders of tall sons; old men wringing helpless hands and moaning piteously; while the children clung to their parents' knees, imploring in innocent terror, sobbing with fear that was greater than they could understand. "Mynheer," said the little gray dominie, "for us what matters it, soon or late? We have run our race out, and are prepared for death. But these women and these children; dost hold the cup for them? Look there! the women and the children! Remember thou them this day!"

Peter Stuyvesant turned on the wall and looked over the narrow way. "Ay, the women and the children!" he said in a dull, dazed way. Slowly turning as if he were moved before a sullen wind or by the force of some unseen hand, he looked out across the shining bay, over the bay and into a world which no man saw save he — a world where failure turns success, where disappointments lose their sting, humiliations never come, and where the promises of youth shall flower every one. Over the shining water he looked, over the slopes of Long Island, where the ironweed was beginning to blow and the blackbirds to gather in the elm-tree tops. There the slopes lay, bright with afternoon, the blue haze gathering on the hills, the cobwebs drifting in the sun. The clover was growing brown in the fields, and the milkweed raveled its faded bloom; the maize stood in yellow, floury tassels, with its silk raveling out from the milky ears between the lips of the harsh green husk. The primrose stood tall in the dusky wood, and from somewhere in a meadow came the imperfect second-singing of meadow-larks, sweet but faint, the broken shred of the April call. He heard the bleating of many flocks, the lowing of kine in

dusty roads; one step more, he heard the singing of reapers in happy fields, wheat cut, barley mown, their laughter in many a starlit lane in a land that was his country's. A land that was his country's! "Oh, my Father!" he said; then he repeated slowly, "The women and the children," and once again, in a dull, dazed way; then turning suddenly without more words, and with a look on his face as if he were stunned, he came hurrying down from the rampart, with the two dominies running at either hand, touching his sleeves, the little gray-haired dominie praying.

Jan Reyndertsen, the master gunner, looked after them as they descended, with a strange look on his face; then he looked at the people huddling there, then at the English fleet, threw down his gun-match on the rampart, and trod it out under his heel. "We are sold!" cried one of the gun-crew, dashing the rammer down. Reyndertsen turned with one flash of wrath and struck him in the mouth. "Sold?" he cried. "Thou lying dog!"

When Peter Stuyvesant had come down from the wall and raised his head again, he saw the flags of the English ships in the river beyond the town. With a great and hideous groan he broke from those who would have held him. "My honor! oh, my honor!" he cried; and as if he were suddenly going mad, he ran like a blind man through the gate. "To the river, to

the river-front!" he exclaimed in a choking voice. "Quick, forward, to the river! The English shall not land!" Leaving the fort be-

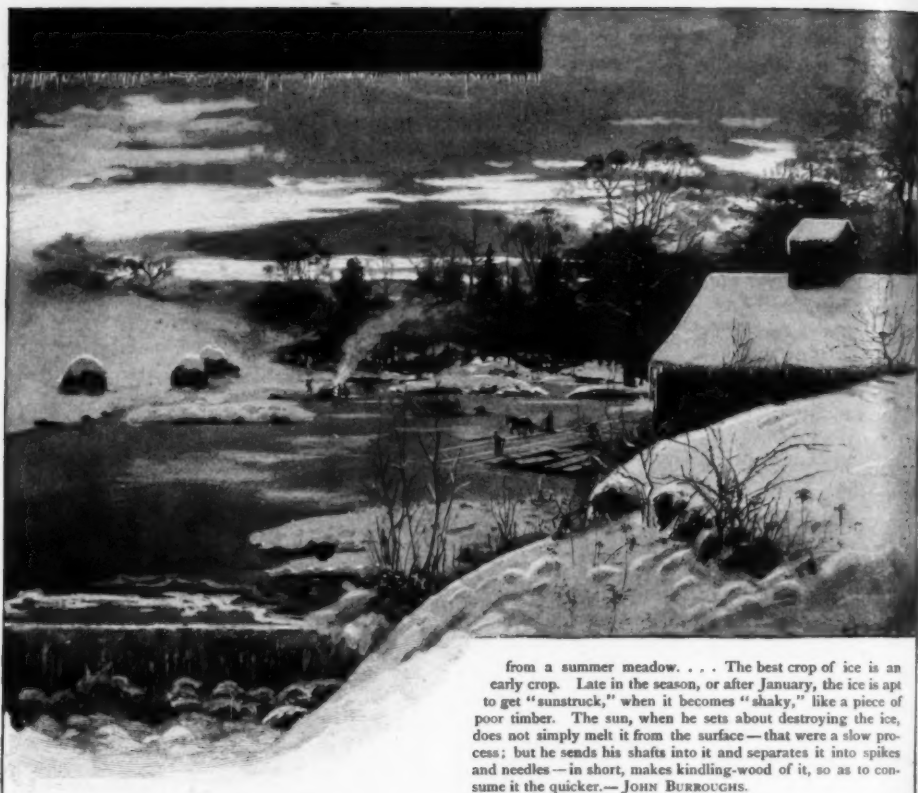


"THERE WAS A MEETING OF THE BURGHERS IN THE STAD HUIS SQUARE, LED BY DIRCK PHILLIPSE, THE CARPENTER." (SEE PAGE 261.)

hind him with Nicasius De Sille, the counselor, to bear the charge of affairs, he ran to the front of the city, with perhaps a hundred men, to oppose the British landing.

But the British made no attempt to land; they let their anchors fall, furled their sails, piped all hands to mess, and rode at their ease on the tide; for they knew that victory was theirs and that New Amsterdam should fall.

(To be continued.)



#### THE JANUARY HARVEST.

THE cutting and gathering of the ice enlivens these broad, white, desolate fields amazingly. One looks down upon the busy scene as from a hilltop upon a river meadow in haying time, only here the figures stand out much more sharply than they do

from a summer meadow. . . . The best crop of ice is an early crop. Late in the season, or after January, the ice is apt to get "sunstruck," when it becomes "shaky," like a piece of poor timber. The sun, when he sets about destroying the ice, does not simply melt it from the surface—that were a slow process; but he sends his shafts into it and separates it into spikes and needles—in short, makes kindling-wood of it, so as to consume it the quicker.—JOHN BURROUGHS.

#### SKATERS SWAY LIKE HAWKS.

SOME little boys ten years old are as handsome skaters as I know. They sweep along with a graceful, floating motion, leaning now to this side, then to that, like a marsh hawk beating the bush.—THOREAU.

#### "THE SPRIGHTLIEST BIT OF LIFE IN ALL THE WINTER LANDSCAPE."

"OH, yes, we know all about that," you exclaim with an I-know-what-you're-going-to-say expression. "We have to be sprightly to keep from freezing, and, besides, skating is the jolliest fun of the whole year. Don't we have nice times gliding here and there, playing tag and lots of other games, cutting curves and letters in the ice, building bonfires, watching the ice-cutters, and — and —"

But wait a minute. I was n't going to say a word about skating. You almost put out of mind what I am going to tell you, and certainly you prove that William Hamilton Gibson did n't have you jolly skaters in mind when he said:

"Indeed, if I were asked to name the sprightliest bit of life to be found in all the winter landscape, I think my choice would have to be, not the mouse, nor chickadee, nor even the hare, but a dweller in the pond or brook, . . . the little black whirligig-beetle known as the *Gyrinus*. They take little account of the changes in the calendar. It is apparently summer all the year round. I fancy their idea of the seasons must be summed up simply as 'green summer' and 'white summer.'"

They surely put a large amount of summer into the winter, as do some of the common flowers that bloom even under the snow. The little whirligigs have none of the sluggishness of the caterpillars, thaw-butterflies, and other in-

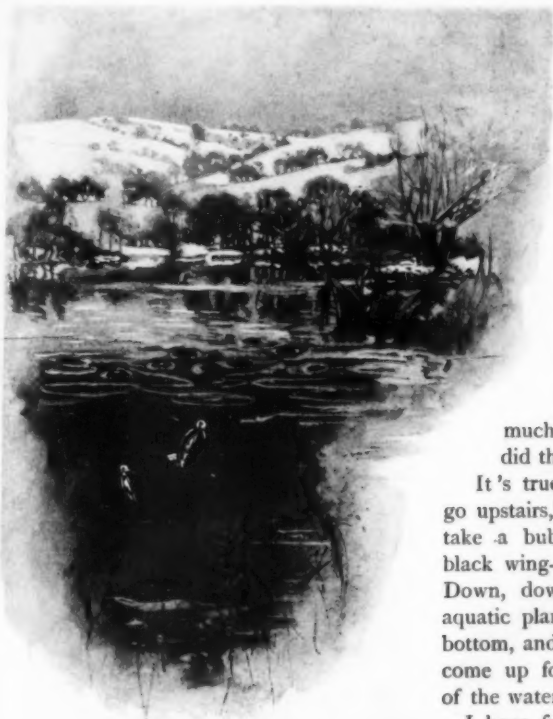
sects that we sometimes find moving about in the warmest days of winter. They certainly enjoy life in spite of the cold, and are as lively — yes, almost as lively as you skaters, and sometimes appear to be playing your games in the thawed open place in the brook, or where the ice has been taken from the pond.

We can readily find them in the "January thaw." Their whirling swarms have surprised many a winter walker, as they surprised Thoreau. Under date of January 24, 1858, he wrote in his journal:

"I see forty or fifty circling together in the smooth and sunny bays along the brook. . . . What a funny way they have of going to bed! They do not take a light and go upstairs;



"I SEE FORTY OR FIFTY CIRCLING TOGETHER IN THE SMOOTH AND SUNNY BAYS ALONG THE BROOK."



"SUDDENLY IT IS HEELS UP AND HEADS DOWN, AND THEY GO TO THEIR MUDDY BED, AND LET THE UNRESTING STREAM FLOW OVER THEM IN THEIR DREAMS."

they go below. Suddenly it is heels up and heads down, and they go to their muddy bed, and let the unresting stream flow over them in their dreams. Sometimes they seem to have a little difficulty in making the plunge. Maybe they are too dry to slip under. . . . I would like to know what it is they communicate to one another—they, who appear to value each other's society so

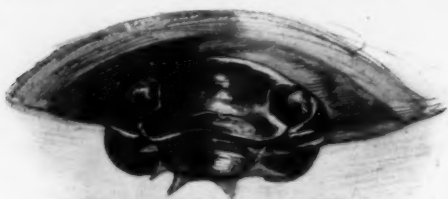
much. How many make a quorum? How did they get their backs polished so?"

It's true that they "do not take a light and go upstairs," but as they go "downstairs" they take a bubble of air under the tips of their black wing-covers, that glistens like a diamond. Down, down they go, till they reach some aquatic plants, or some sticks or leaves on the bottom, and there they hold fast till they again come up for their mazy games on the surface of the water.

I have found it very interesting to keep several in an aquarium, and watch their habits on the surface and among the water-plants. As

the little beetles can fly, though loath to do so under ordinary circumstances, it is necessary to cover the aquarium with mosquito-netting, cheese-cloth, or something similar.

The *Gyrinus* not only has an advantage over most insects in its active life in winter and in summer, but in being adapted to air by its



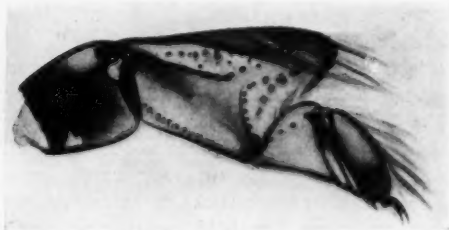
HEAD OF GYRINUS.

(Drawn from an enlarged view in the microscope. "One pair of large goggle-like compound eyes under the head; another pair of smaller ones on the upper side of the head.")

wings, and to the water by its polished water-proof armor and by legs especially formed for securing a firm hold on the water.

One remarkable adaptation to this life of air and of water is the two distinct sets of eyes. There is one pair of large goggle-like compound eyes under the head; another pair of smaller ones on the upper side of the head keeps on the watch for enemies in the air or for some young naturalists coming along with a net. It is very difficult for us to get near them, and I presume the big under-the-water eyes tell equally well of the approach of a fish.

Seeing both up and down at the same time, enjoying both water and air and all seasons,



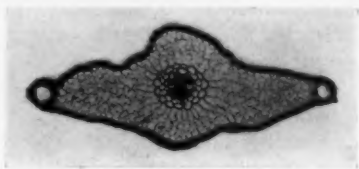
LEG OF GYRINUS.

(Photographed in a microscope. The flattened, oar-like form and the fringe of hairs give the little animal a firm hold on the water, so it can dart here and there very quickly and easily.)

why should n't they be happy and sprightly — yes, almost as much as you lively skaters?

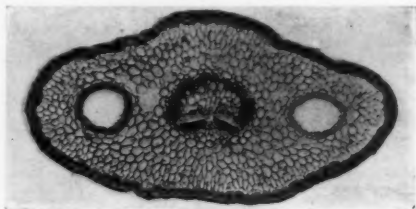
### HIDDEN BEAUTY OF THE EVERGREENS.

NOT one word of argument to the young folks is needed to prove the open and well



LARCH FROM NORTHERN MONTANA.

known beauty of the evergreen-trees — especially at this season of the year. Indoors we have recently seen them, the most beautiful objects of the holidays. Was there ever anything more attractive than a Christmas tree, with its golden lights among the emerald green of the branches? How the silvery balls and the pearly strings of popcorn glistened and be-



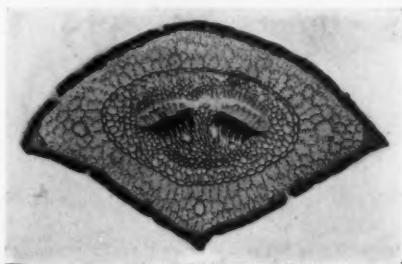
SPRUCE.

came — well, almost as bright as our eyes as we viewed the packages!

Or perhaps out of doors some of us have seen how true it is, after the first snowfall, that

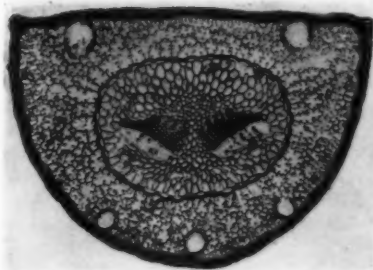
Every pine and fir and hemlock  
Wore ermine too dear for an earl.

The branches had held all the snow that fell in that place. A heavy load it was, as their



PITCH PINE.





RED PINE.

bowing down told us; but it was a burden well borne for the good of others — for the birds and rabbits that enjoyed the protected, cozy ground underneath.

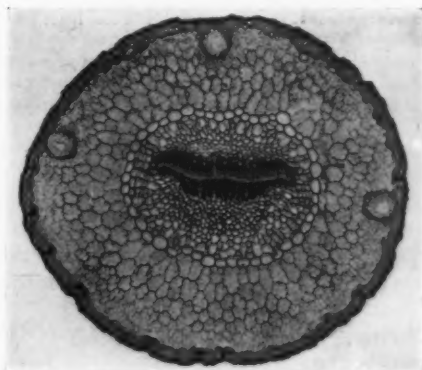
We admired the Christmas tree indoors, decorated by our grown-up friends, and we now admire, as well, those out-of-doors Christmas trees decorated by the snow. The snowflakes may well be called nature's winter bloom of the evergreens. Under all conditions, especially in winter, the evergreens are beautiful —



WHITE PINE.

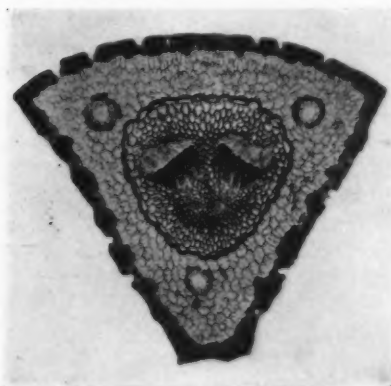
perhaps more beautiful than some of us have seen. There is a hidden beauty of these slender green leaves. To find it and to show it to us, one of our grown-up friends, Mr. W. H. Walmsley, has very carefully cut some of these leaves square across with a very sharp knife especially adapted to this work. Then, from one of the cut ends he has taken a very thin slice, and viewed it flatwise under a microscope. So thin was this tiny cross-section that the light could pass readily through it. On the upper end of

the microscope he arranged a camera, so as to photograph this enlarged view of the structure. Each kind of evergreen has its own peculiar and very interesting arrangement of the microscopic cells. In nearly all there is around the center one row that looks somewhat like a necklace. Around the outside there are a few rows of very small and firm cells, that form a kind of protective box or cylinder for the softer cells of the interior. Many other grown-up friends have, like Mr. Walmsley, found these

CALIFORNIA PINE (*Pinus monophylla*).

structures very interesting, and some have made collections of the various kinds.

Thus we learn that the leaves of evergreens, which to the careless observer seem much alike, are really different from one another, and that the differences are interesting.

CALIFORNIA PINE (*Pinus Torreyana*).

## "WE WILL WRITE TO ST. NICHOLAS ABOUT IT."

LARGE BATS KNOWN AS "FLYING-FOXES."

MARYBOROUGH, QUEENSLAND.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Flying-foxes are a great pest here. They hang to the trees by their claws, and sometimes by the hooks on their wings. As soon as it is dusk they come out of the "scrub" and fly over to the fruit-trees, and they stay in the trees all night, eating the fruit. They swing themselves before they fly. They are very peculiar to look at. They have a head like a fox, and large wings of skin without feathers. After they are shot they do not fall, but still hang there, looking as if they are alive. They stay all day in the scrub, hanging to the trees, and when men find a camp of them they destroy them. Your loving reader,

HARRY E. ALDRIDGE (age 7).

About seventy-five species of these large bats are found in tropical countries. They eat fruit, and do not eat insects, as do our native smaller members of the bat family. Most young folks are familiar with these smaller bats from seeing them flying near electric-lights, to which swarms of insects also are attracted.

"Flying-fox" is an especially appropriate name, because the head bears a close resemblance to that of a fox. This is especially true if this bat be compared with the small African fox known as fennec.

Flying-foxes are very destructive on plantations of cocoanuts, bananas, and other fruits. Quite rightly, no one is allowed to bring them alive to this country; for they are voracious eaters, and consume and destroy a much greater quantity of fruit than one would suppose possible.

In their usual method of roosting in large colonies, they give the trees an appearance of having a foliage of peculiar large, dark-colored leaves.



THE FLYING-FOX.

A large bat, named from the fox-like shape of the head.



AFRICAN FOX KNOWN AS FENNEC.

The head of this fox is closely resembled by that of the large bat known as "flying-fox."

KEPT A BIRD "RESTAURANT."

IRONTON, COL.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have enjoyed you very much. I am eleven years old, and am spending the winter with my father and mother and little sister in the Rocky Mountains.

We are at an altitude of ten thousand feet. I want to tell you about the birds we have here.

I read in a paper about a man who kept a restaurant for the birds; so my sister and I have tried to have one.

This morning we tied some pieces of mutton suet together, and climbed up a ladder and fastened them with a stout string to the limbs of some aspen-trees near our house. After we came down a bird called the camp-bird came. The camp-bird is a beautiful gray, and about as large as a dove. Then the blue jay came, and the magpies, the red-headed woodpecker, and the dear little chickadees.

Another bird came whose name I do not know. The color of its body is gray; its wings and tail are black on top and white underneath; its bill is black and much longer than the bills of the other birds. Perhaps you can tell me its name. We sometimes see another gray bird, larger than a robin, whose head and breast are a beautiful Indian red. His mate is just like him, except that her head and breast are yellow. It is a beautiful sight to see them feeding, and they are quite tame and do not seem afraid of us. We intend to feed them through the winter. I would very much like to have you print my letter.

From your new friend, AMY LOUISE FRY.

Your first-mentioned unknown bird is the northern shrike, called also the butcher-bird. Its bill resembles that of a hawk, and foot that of a sparrow. It has a queer custom of fastening its prey, usually mice or small birds, on a thorn or in the crotch of a small branch, tearing off the flesh like a hawk.

Your other gray bird is the pine-grosbeak, which is very gentle and easily made a pet in a cage. They eat chiefly the seeds of evergreen-trees, and various berries and buds.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR USING A "SIMPLE MICROSCOPE."

THE "simple microscopes" to be distributed "to the six young folks who will most appreciate and best use them," so far as could be decided by the letters received by this department, have been awarded to the writers of the six letters from which the following are extracts. The suggestions of the prize-winners will doubtless be of aid to other young folks.

#### ON THE HILLSIDE AND AT THE SEA-SHORE.

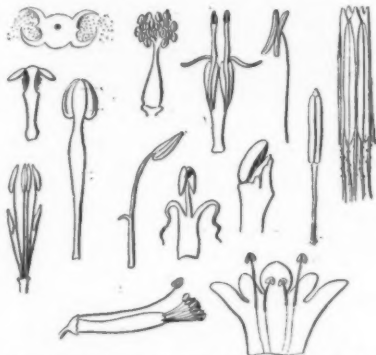
CALIENTE, KERN CO., CAL.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: . . . To go out on a hillside with one of these useful microscopes, and to pick a flower for the purpose of studying it, may seem entirely unnecessary to some people. It is, however, not only a pleasure but a duty to all nature-lovers, for everybody should take great care to develop such a beautiful talent as nature-loving.

Pull a flower to pieces; observe through the microscope the shape, tint, and texture of the corolla. Notice



PEACH BLOSSOM CUT LENGTHWISE TO SHOW ARRANGEMENT OF PARTS.



THE VARIOUS FORMS OF STAMENS ARE ESPECIALLY BEAUTIFUL WHEN VIEWED BY AID OF A SIMPLE MICROSCOPE.

the formation of the calyx. Study the powder on the anthers. Break or cut the pistil, and examine the ovules (and their arrangement), that will become seeds.

Then the plant as a whole is to be studied. Take almost any common plant, shrub, or tree. Look through the microscope at a single leaf, and study the veins, or arrangement of the different parts of the stem or branches, besides many other wonders. In doing this you soon perceive that botany is very interesting. If you



STAMENS LIKE FAIRIES DANCING IN A CIRCLE.



SOME QUEER FORMS OF PISTILS.

a very fine needle point, but looking as large as a pin-head through the microscope. Do the same with the other minerals, and you gain a great deal of information.

An ant is a very interesting study, and so is the aphid, the little creature that serves the ant for a cow. When the ant is under the microscope, you can observe the shape of its body, head, legs, and its antennae, besides many other curious features. The aphid reveals many queer habits if you observe it when eating. In shape it is somewhat long and oval, and its color either dark brown, red, or light green. If you watch it closely, you



A BIT OF SEAWEED FROM THE BEACH.

will find that it has a slender tube on its back. Touch this tube lightly and a clear, crystal-like dew issues. This is called the honey-dew, and the ants prize it very highly.

Another queer creature to observe is the silkworm. Place its eggs under the glass, and peep through. An odd sight will greet your surprised gaze. From several eggs silkworms will be seen, with their black heads apparently peering out of the shells.

There is the fly with his gauzy wings, the leaves of trees, the ladybug, the different kinds of moss, all kinds of minerals, hornets, bugs, and, best of all, the vegetable. The vegetable! You think I mean a single kind of vegetable? Oh,

are by the sea, you can study the wonders of the sea, with or without the microscope. Take the advantage of a receding wave to seize a streamer of seaweed that is left on the beach from the wave; you might easily take a strip of the seaweed which lies on the dry sand, but fresh seaweed would be the best.

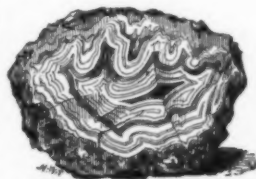
Among minerals, there are agate, gold and silver, copper, brass, iron, and zinc. If you pick up a rock containing gold to see it more plainly, take a microscope to aid you. Then in the rock, apparently smooth to your naked eye, appear small crevices in which you see lumps of gold, probably as tiny as



SMALL BRANCHES MAY BE CUT ACROSS AND LENGTHWISE TO SHOW ARRANGEMENT OF FIBER, WOOD, BARK, ETC.

will find that it has a slender tube on its back. Touch this tube lightly and a clear, crystal-like dew issues. This is called the honey-dew, and the ants prize it very highly.

Another queer creature to observe is the silkworm. Place its eggs under the glass, and peep through. An odd sight will greet your surprised



THE BANDED STRUCTURE OF AGATE IS VERY BEAUTIFUL.



THE MARKINGS AND COLORS OF SHELLS ARE VIEWED TO BEST ADVANTAGE BY AID OF A SIMPLE MICROSCOPE.

#### INSECT AND PLANT STRUCTURE.

no. I mean the bean, the potato, the turnip, the carrot, and many more. In the vegetable you can study the parts, examine them through the microscope, and draw them. Also examine your collection of shells.

MARY H. RYAN (age 11).

ST. PAUL, MINN.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: . . . I would take off a potato-bug's shell-like outer wings and see his red wings that look like silk. You can hardly believe they are there unless you have seen them. I would like to see the fly's foot and ascertain how it is that he can crawl on the ceiling and not fall off. It would be great fun to see his large, compound eyes. I should get a nice thick blade of grass and carefully examine it. A microscope would be very useful in distinguishing the different



BEES' LEG.

(As seen by the aid of a microscope. Shows the flat surface fringed with stiff hairs for carrying pollen for the so-called "bee-bread" for the baby bees. Bees may be easily obtained in warm days in winter.)

worm spinning his thread, a butterfly, the stamens and pistils of flowers, honeycomb cell, a wasp's nest, a spider's web, and I would also give an ant some sugar and watch him carry it. Yours very sincerely,

RUTH M. VON DORN (age 13).



PAINTED-LADY BUTTERFLY.

Nearly all butterflies have beautiful wings. A pocket-microscope brings out the color patterns to best advantage. Examine those in your collection. Note the arrangement of the scales.

#### THROUGH THE FOREST AND BY THE LAKESIDE.

CORONA, CAL.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: . . . If I had a microscope the first thing I would like to do would be to take a walk through the woods to a pond or lake. On the way I would like to look at the cells of plants and fruits, also the skin on fruits, and the bark of plants and trees. I would like also to look at the different parts of flowers.

Then when I got down to the lake I would look at the different parts of ferns, mosses, and lichens that grew on or near the bank. And then I'd get some sediment and look at the plant and animal forms in it. On the way home I would catch some butterflies and look at the scales on their wings, and I would get some other insects, especially small ones, and look at their heads, "tongues," and legs.

Then when I got home I would catch a fly and look at its eye. I think it would be interesting to look through a microscope at brown sugar, moldy bread, and some down from a pillow; also fish-scales, and a sponge.



ALL FEATHERS UNDER THE POCKET-MICROSCOPE SHOW BEAUTIFUL STRUCTURE, AND SOME SHOW INTERESTING AND VARIED MARKINGS.

When I am at the seaside I would enjoy looking at shells and seaweed through a microscope.

Yours hopefully,

HOLLAND F. BURR (age 9).

#### ON ANY OUTING.

PHI KAPPA PSI HOUSE, ANN ARBOR, MICH.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: . . . I should like very much to have a microscope. It would be so nice to have even a small one to take with me when I go out for a drive, a picnic, a wheel-ride, or a walk in the woods and fields. With a microscope one can come nearer to really seeing what things are like and what they are made of. One day last spring I went out with a party of young people for a morning in the woods. Mr. Howe, the gentleman who went with us, knows a good deal about nature and science. After we had been there a few minutes, he sat down on a stump, and taking out a pad and pencil, told us we could have a race to see who could see the most things, and who had the brightest eyes. We all scattered, but were soon back with specimens. Then he wrote our names, one on each page of the tablet, and

under it made a list of the things brought. Among other things were a few scraps of fungus, some beetle-chips, and a few pebbles. I examined these with Mr. Howe's microscope. The under side of the fungus looked like a tiny piece of fine honeycomb. The beetle-chips had holes all through them, and the pebbles had glacier-marks on them. If I had a microscope I should keep a note-book, and write about what I saw that was new and curious.

Your interested reader,  
RACHEL RHOADES (age 12).



SIDE VIEW, MAGNIFIED, OF COMPOUND EYE OF HOUSEFLY.

#### THE MICROSCOPE INDOORS.

MOUND CITY, MO.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: As far back as I can remember, I have usually spent part of Sunday looking at something through the microscope. Sometimes it was flowers; other times it was seeds, leaves, stones, insects, or anything we could find. Mama saved things for the winter, like shells or dried grasses. Lately I have learned the names of the parts of flowers, and that has helped me. A short time ago I noticed all the flowers that have spurs, such as the larkspur, balsam, pansy, nasturtium, and violet. But I am most pleased with the beauty of the centers of all flowers. Some common kinds have centers even more beautiful than the center of the water-lily.

I was much interested last fall in gathering seeds. Through the microscope we could see their shapes and markings better than by the naked eye. The colors and shapes, both in the seed and in the pods, were very interesting. Some of the partitions that divided the pods were like beautiful fine lace. Some of the pods had over two hundred seeds. I wish some of your young readers would look at the prickles of the cockle-bur. They are like tiny fish-hooks. No wonder they catch on everything! Mama has a collection of small shells, and we have looked at each one through the glass. Some are as small as a sweet-pea seed, but each is beautiful in its marks and colors. The leaves of plants are very beautiful, and I have learned much about their veins and tissues, each kind of leaf showing a different pattern. Once I tried to look at some snowflakes, but they melted too quickly. I believe I would have to write a book if I told all I have discovered with our small microscope. I am making a collection of beetles and other insects. I have a beautiful sphinx-moth, but-



BREAD MOLD.

(Your microscope may not find this form, but it will reveal others equally interesting.)



VARIOUS FORMS OF ANTENNAE.  
(Shows position on head of a firefly of the two thread-like "notched" antennae, also enlarged views of peculiar forms of antennae from other insects. All are easily seen by aid of a pocket-microscope.)

terflies, and grasshoppers. One of the boys found a giant bug just like your picture in the July number. We did not know its name till we read the article.

Mama says the greatest truth I have learned is that the more closely we look at nature the more beautiful it is; but with man's work it is far different.

Your devoted reader,  
DAVID J. DONNAN  
(age 11).

#### VINEGAR-EELS.

MADISONVILLE, OHIO.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: . . . One may see with a simple microscope the wings, the feelers or antennae, the eyes, legs, and feet, the sting, and many other parts of many of the larger insects. One of these glasses also aids in the viewing of small animals, from the vinegar-eel to the tadpole, and the parts of many of the larger animals. I have seen, with a compound microscope, vinegar-eels magnified one hundred diameters, or a thousand times; they have markings on their backs. They are visible with the unaided eye, and appear about one sixteenth of an inch long, small, semi-opaque, hair-like eels. They are to be found in all commercial vinegar.

G. R. HUGHES (age 14).



VINEGAR-EEL GREATLY MAGNIFIED.

Other very valuable suggestions were made by the following:

Berta M. Bennett, Willis, Mass.—insects, bark, and snow crystals.

George Polk, Bushong, Ky.—earthworms and singing apparatus of cicada.

Henry Goldman, 414 E. 77th St., New York, and Walter E. Ealy, Kingman, Ariz.—various minerals.

John McBean Neil, Mount Florida, Glasgow, and Fred H. Lahec, Brookline, Mass.—extended lists of plant and insect life.

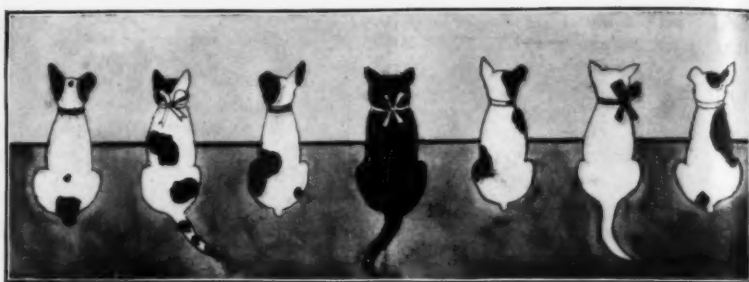
Herbert Martin, Park Ridge, Ill.—water algae and protective organs of insects, such as stings, etc.

Rita Comacho, Montclair, N. J.—horsehair, cotton, wood fiber, and various kinds of cloth.

D. F. Butter, Berwick, Me.—insect wings, parts of flowers, and minerals.



# THE ST. NICHOLAS LEAGUE FOR JANUARY.



"HEADING FOR JANUARY." BY GERTRUDE CROSLAND, AGE 15.

Now that the year is nearly done,  
Good cats and dogs and children, too,  
Will turn their backs on nineteen one  
And look for nineteen two.

These lines don't really mean that we should forget good old nineteen one, and, in fact, when you come to read them over carefully, they don't seem to mean much of anything, but they were suggested by the above very nice drawing, that might have taken a prize if it had been on the right subject, which was "Holly and Mistletoe," while if there is any holly and mistletoe in this drawing it must be out of sight somewhere, and maybe has been hidden by the very nice dogs for the very nice cats to stand under when the holiday games begin; and this is the longest sentence the League editor can write, and does n't mean much more than the poem, though the poem means as much as the picture, or the editor could n't have written the poem about the picture, and anyway it's a very nice picture, as he may have said once before and may say again before he gets done with this sentence, and it makes a very nice heading for the League department, for which some members are all the time writing just such nice long sentences as this, and don't seem to be able to get to the end of them, or to mean any more when they do get to the end than this sentence when the League editor gets to the end of it, which he will some time, if he has to go back and tie it to the beginning, and maybe write another poem that does n't mean what it says or much of anything else about the picture, which is a very nice picture, as before remarked, and might have taken a prize if it had been on the right subject, which was "Holly and Mistletoe," while if there is any holly and mistletoe —but here he is really repeating himself, which he must not do, or it will be time there was a new editor instead of a new year, and then folks would be saying "Happy

New Editor" instead of "Happy New Year," and all the nice poems about "Good-by, Old Year," would mean "Good-by, Old Editor," and all the good cats' and dogs' and children's backs would be turned on him, and he would be sorry he ever saw the picture and wrote a poem that did n't mean what he said or much of anything else, though it is a very nice picture, and might have taken a prize if it had been on the right subject, which was "Holly and Mistletoe," while if there is any —but, dear me! dear me! here we are on the third time around and no getting-off place, and no way to stop except with a great big, hearty Happy New Year from a Happy Old Editor who has run his sentence plump into

## PRIZE-WINNERS, COMPETITION No. 25.

In making the prize awards, contributors' ages are considered.

VERSE. Cash prize, Marguerite M. Hillery (age 14), 105 W. 77th St., New York City.

Gold badge, Florence L. Bain (age 16), care H. L. Bain, Dept. Public Charities, Ft. E. 26th St., New York City.

Silver badges, S. R. MacVeagh (age 13), care Charles MacVeagh, 40 E. 74th St., New York City, Mabel Stark (age 12), Sawkill, Pike Co., Pa., and Thérèse H. McDonnell (age 9), 609 N. 17th St., Philadelphia, Pa.

PROSE. Gold badges, Margaret Hyde Beebe (age 12), La Mascotte, Montagnibert, Lausanne, Switzerland, and Gretchen Rupp (age 14), 359 W. 34th St., New York City.

Silver badges, Frederick D. Seward (age 13), 4 Childs Block, Binghamton, N. Y., and Francis Marion Miller (age 9), 888 Greene Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

DRAWING. Gold badges, Melton R. Owen (age 14), 64 Grove St., Brooklyn, N. Y., and William E. Hill (age 14), 410 Grand Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.



"AUTUMN SPORTS." BY HUGO GRAF, AGE 13.  
(GOLD BADGE.)

Silver badges, Yvonne Jequier (age 16), Faubourg du Cret 5, Neuchâtel, Switzerland, and Lois D. Wilcox (age 12), Norfolk Road, Euclid Heights, Cleveland, O.

PHOTOGRAPHY. Gold badge, Hugo Graf (age 13), 4545 N. Market St., St. Louis, Mo.

Silver badges, Helen Dickinson (age 13), Garvanza Sta., Los Angeles, Cal., and John L. Langhorne (age 14), 754 Selby Ave., St. Paul, Minn.

WILD-ANIMAL AND BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY. First prize, "Moose," by Morris Pratt (age 15), 241 Clinton Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y. Second prize, "Yellowstone Bears," by Lily C. Worthington (age 16), Francis Lane, Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, Ohio. Third prize, "Young Sea-mew," by Louis Grandgent (age 13), 107 Walker St., Cambridge, Mass.

PUZZLE-MAKING. Gold badge, Gertrude Helen Schirmer (age 12), 117 E. 35th St., New York City. Silver badge, Roger E. Chase, Jr. (age 14), 444 St. Helen's Ave., Tacoma, Wash.

PUZZLE-ANSWERS. Gold badge, Olive R. T. Griffin (age 11), Lock Box 184, Rockport, Mass.

Silver badges, Edgar Whitlock (age 12), 694 Putnam Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y., and Harriet F. Seaver (age 16), 1 W. 92nd St., New York City.

### GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR.

BY MARGUERITE M. HILLERY  
(AGE 14).

(Cash Prize.)

THE minutes are flying, the old year  
is dying,

The time will soon come when the  
old clock will chime,  
When the year, bent and gray, will  
pass quickly away,  
And the new year will come in the  
footprints of time.

Old year, you will go as you came, in  
the snow;

For that emblem of childhood is  
waiting for all;  
And when in old age you will pass  
from life's stage,  
The snowflakes will cover the place  
where you fall.

For many you hold what is dearer  
than gold;

We will never forget you, although  
you have fled.

For the new year is here, and so  
good-by, old year;

We will number you now with the years that are dead.

### DONALD'S DREAM THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

(A play for little folks.)

BY GRETCHEN RUPP (AGE 14).

(Gold Badge.)

SCENE I. Child's room with bed in one corner holding sleeping boy.

Suddenly an Elf, dressed in furs, steps out of the fireplace, looks around, and then advances softly toward sleeping child. Peeps under cover, then runs back to fireplace. Calls softly up the chimney:

"Here is a little boy  
Who seems to be good;  
Come down, and bring with you  
A coat and a hood."

Another Elf, dressed in same manner, appears in the fireplace, carrying a fur coat over arm.

Running to the bed, they dress Donald in the furs, and then carry him to the fireplace and disappear up the chimney.

*Curtain.*

SCENE II. Open space in snow-covered wood. House on hill in the distance. Many little fur-clad Elves singing and dancing, with Donald in their midst.

DONALD (*awakening, looks around, very much surprised*). Where am I?

ELVES (*unanimously*).

We thought you had been good,  
And so we brought you here  
To this distant northern wood  
To Santa and his deer.

D. (*looking around*). Where is he?

ELVES. In that little house  
On yonder hill;  
He is making toys  
Your stocking to fill.

D. (*eagerly*). Oh, take me there, please!



"AUTUMN SPORTS." BY JOHN L. LANGHORNE, AGE 14. (SILVER BADGE.)

Elves, forming together, carry Donald toward the house.

*Curtain.*

SCENE III. Room in log-cabin, littered with toys, and illuminated by tall candles on table in corner at which Santa Claus is sitting, busily making toys.

*Enter Elves with Donald.*

SANTA CLAUS (*turning round*).

Well, now, who bring you here  
At the busiest time of the year?

ELVES. We bring this little boy,  
Who has been good all year,  
And so now has the joy,  
Of seeing you and your deer.

Santa Claus takes Donald on his knee, and asks him what things he would like for Christmas.

D. Oh, I would like a pair  
of skates,  
And then a baseball and  
a bat,  
And then a great big bag  
of dates,  
And last a great big  
sleigh like that.

[Points to toboggan.

S. C. If by the time I reach  
your house  
I have those toys for  
which you're wishing,  
And you're asleep, still as  
a mouse,  
I'll drop them all into  
your stocking.

D. Except the sleigh.

S. C. (laughing).  
Yes, except the sleigh.  
But now I must away,  
And fill the stockings of  
the rich and poor,  
Till none will hold a pres-  
ent more.

Santa Claus goes out  
with bag of toys, and is heard calling to reindeer.  
Elves then carry Donald out of house on their shoul-  
ders, waving hands to audience.

Curtain.

#### THE CLOSING YEAR.

BY FLORENCE L. BAIN (AGE 16).

(Gold Badge.)

OH, brave old year, thou soon must close,  
For wild and loud the north wind blows,  
The sky is gray.

'T was but a few short months ago  
That nineteen one tripped o'er the snow,  
On New Year's Day.

We greeted thee with songs and cheers,  
Thou youngest of a hundred years,  
In all thy pride.

From darkness Hope, full-armed,  
sprang;

Our hearts awoke, the sweet bells rang.  
The north wind sighed.

Ah, gray old year of nineteen one,  
Thy silent watch will soon be done,  
For swift and white

The whirling snow flies o'er the earth  
To tell thee of the new year's birth;  
Farewell to-night!

#### A CHRISTMAS TREE'S DREAM.

BY FREDERICK D. SEWARD (AGE 13).

(Silver Badge.)

I AM a Christmas tree. Once I had  
a dream that had a very bad beginning  
and a very nice ending.

I dreamed that I had been chopped  
down, and was trimmed ready for Christmas day to come.

I was feeling very fine, thinking of all the children that  
I would make happy, when the door opened, and in  
came some creatures and a teacher, walking very sol-  
emnly in single file.

The creatures were just like children, but I don't think  
they were, because they were so very, very clean. I



"AUTUMN SPORTS." BY HELEN DICKINSON, AGE 13.  
(SILVER BADGE.)

could n't see even a speck  
of dirt on any of them.  
And they had so many  
study-books. Each one  
had about fifteen. They  
looked at me wonderingly.  
Then one of them asked  
the teacher what I was.

"That," said the teacher,  
"is an object called a  
Christmas tree. Wicked  
parents purchase them for  
their children. Then the  
children waste about half  
a day in having what they  
call a good time. Think  
of it, wasting half a day  
when they might employ  
it in studying! Oh, it's  
more than I can bear!"

At this time all the crea-  
tures and the teacher gave  
a long groan.

"Now let us destroy it,"  
said the teacher.

"Yes, yes!" cried all the  
creatures.

They had the rope tied to my trunk, and were just  
going to pull me over when—the door flew open, and in  
ran some real children. One of the boys actually had a  
smudge on the tip end of his nose. Oh, how I enjoyed  
the sight of it!

The creatures gave one look of dismay, and then they  
ran off with their books as fast as they could go.

After the real children had gotten their presents, they  
formed a circle around me, and one of the boys shouted,  
"What's the matter with the Christmas tree?" and they  
all shouted back, "It's all right!" Then I woke up.



"AUTUMN SPORTS." BY RALPH SPRENG, AGE 15.

#### MY CHRISTMAS DREAM.

BY MARJORIE WELLINGTON (AGE 8).

ON Christmas I dream the lovely dreams about Santa  
Claus coming and filling up all the stockings, and when  
we wake up it is true, and when we go to bed at night  
we thank God for our merry Christmas.

## THE WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS TREE.

BY FRANCIS MARION MILLER (AGE 9).

(Silver Badge.)

WE were three days out from Liverpool, on the steamship "Calcutta." It was Christmas Eve, and about ten o'clock. Many had already retired to their state-rooms, but the saloons were yet gay with merry-makers. Suddenly a steward came rushing in the music-room, where most of the passengers were assembled.

"Oh," he cried, "come on deck! There's a most wonderful Christmas tree growing right out of the ocean!"

We all ran on deck to see what was the matter. Sure enough, there was a Christmas tree!

"What do you suppose it is?" one of the passengers questioned.

"I don't know," was the response. "How beautiful it is! It is like an enchantment."

"Why, it's like a dream," said another.

At that moment the Christmas tree began to fade.

Boom! Loud and clear came the report of a gun.

Boom, boom! The passengers looked at the sailors, and sailors looked at the passengers.

Boom, boom!—boom, boom, boom!

"Distress signal," came a voice from the bridge. "Fire the return signal!"

"Ay, ay!" came a voice from below.

Just then the wheelman said to the captain, "Look there!" and he pointed his finger out at the dark sea.

"What's the trouble?" cried the captain, springing to his side.

"Derelict!" was the sober answer.

The captain turned his night glasses on the dark object which so suddenly loomed up on the port bow.

Boom! sounded the return signal from amidships.



"MOOSE." BY MORRIS PRATT, AGE 15. (FIRST PRIZE, "WILD-ANIMAL PHOTOGRAPH.")

I have ever spent, the first and only one I have had at sea is probably the most impressed on my mind.

In the meantime we had come up with the sinking ship, and rescued her passengers just as they were taking to the boats. Then what a clatter of voices!—exclamations, questions, and answers—questions, answers, and exclamations!

Then came the story: The other vessel had been having a fireworks display, and one of the pieces was a Christmas tree, when she ran into the derelict. A great hole was stove in her side, and she began to sink. A panic ensued; guns were fired. Oh, what a time there was! And then, just as they were getting into their boats, the Calcutta came up and all were taken off.

"Storm that derelict!" ordered the captain, and storm it we did until there was n't a whole timber left.

Of all the Christmases



"YELLOWSTONE BEARS." BY LILY C. WORTHINGTON, AGE 16. (SECOND PRIZE, "WILD-ANIMAL PHOTOGRAPH.")

GOOD-BY, NINETEEN ONE. WELCOME, NINETEEN TWO.

BY S. R. MACVEAGH (AGE 13).

(Silver Badge.)

QUARTER of twelve on New Year's Eve

The family gather around;

The children wonder why they're not

Allowed to make a sound.

The old clock slowly ticks along,

And suddenly it hums;

A buzzing noise, twelve times "ding-dong";

Then hush! the new year comes!



"YOUNG SEA-MEW." BY LOUIS GRANDGENT, AGE 13. (THIRD PRIZE, "WILD-ANIMAL PHOTOGRAPH.")

## BLANCHETTE'S DREAM.

BY MARGARET HYDE BEEBE  
(AGE 12).

(Gold Badge Illustrated Story.)

It was the night before Christmas. Everything was covered with a soft carpet of snow that sparkled and glistened in the moonlight, and a cold, bleak wind from the glacier was blowing. However, in the heart of the Swiss Alps, Blanchette was warm in her cozy little stall. She was dreaming.

She heard her door open, and looking up, she saw Pierre, the shepherd-boy. He led her out gently to where many other goats were gathered. At first Blanchette felt shy, but she soon saw that they were her playmates of the last year. Then she knew that it was summer, and that they all were going to the high pastures, where the butter and cheese are made.

They soon started on their climb. Blanchette was greatly tempted by the fresh green grass on her path; but Pierre kept saying: "Wait till you get to the top." So Blanchette waited. At last they reached a group of chalets, longer, lower, more roughly built, and less clean than the chalet of Blanchette's mistress.

This was the end of the journey. Blanchette recognized her last year's stall, and saw once more the clear fountain where, morning and evening, all the flock used to come and drink. Then she listened with delight to the bells of the great herd of cows, and tinkled her own in answer.

Not until she had found everything all right did the little goat remember that she was hungry. Then, calling to her companions to join her, she bounded away up the hillside. How happy she was! The day was perfect; the sun was shining bright and warm, but there was a playful little breeze that toyed with her long white beard and made her feel frisky. How much fun it was to peep over the precipices, to leap from rock to rock where the starry edelweiss grew! How delicious were the gentians, how toothsome the

Suddenly she heard a sound like the call of a bugle. It was Pierre calling them to be milked.



"HOLLY AND MISTLETOE." BY WILLIAM E. HILL,  
AGE 14. (GOLD BADGE.)



BLANCHETTE'S STABLE. (SEE STORY.)

bound and—awoke. In vain did she peep out of the tiny crack in her stable. Pierre, the other goats, the rocks, the precipices, the flowers, all had disappeared; everything was cold snow and ice. Blanchette felt a bitter disappointment, but as she was a good goat, she turned over and went to sleep.

## FAREWELL TO NINETEEN ONE.

BY MABEL STARK (AGE 12).

(Silver Badge.)

"FAREWELL, farewell to nineteen one,"

The wintry wind doth sigh;

"Farewell, farewell; we grieve for you,"

Say snowflakes, passing by.

On the hilltops snow is drifting,

On the banks the flakes are sifting.

While the snow the wind is lifting,

And the closing year doth die.

"Farewell, farewell to nineteen one,"

The northern wind  
hath said;

And another year has  
rolled away,

And nineteen one is  
dead.

So nineteen one has  
rolled away,

The closing year is  
through;

So hip, hurrah for the  
closing year!

Three cheers for  
nineteen two!

## EDITH'S CHRISTMAS DREAM.

BY ETHEL R. FREEMAN (AGE 10).

It was the night before Christmas, and all were asleep in the large house on the hill but Edith. She was thinking of Santa Claus and what he would bring her. Presently she heard a sound. She listened breathlessly. Yes, there it was again; it was the sound of many hoofs on the roof. "It is Santa Claus," thought Edith. Yes, it certainly was. The sound ceased, but she could hear some one walking on the roof; then bang, bang, bang! and a funny little old man jumped into the room. It was Santa Claus. He was dressed from head to foot in furs, and his face looked rosier and jollier than ever. The first thing he did was to look around the room; then he laid his bag of toys on the floor and went toward the two stockings hanging on the fireplace, and filled them. He then left some of the larger toys on the floor, and proceeded to take a small Christmas tree from his pack. After he had trimmed the tree he immediately took leave.

Then one of Edith's old dolls said to a new one: "When I came here I was just as pretty as you are, but after I had been here a month I was laid on my bed with nothing over me, and there I had to stay. I was so cold, but my mistress paid no attention to me at all. Her brother pulled my hair and threw me around the room, and still she paid no attention; so finally my hair came out, and I lost an arm and a leg, and now you see how I look. I hope she will take better care of you."

"Oh, dear!" sighed the fine doll. "I never could stand such treatment. She must be a horrid old thing."

"That's so," cried a little lamb that stood near; "she



must. She looked so kind over there in her bed I thought I would like it here so much, but now I'm sorry I came."

"Miss Edith, come, it's morning!"  
Edith sat up, dreamily rubbing her eyes. "Why, Mary," she said, "it's all a dream! How funny! There's one thing about it, though. I never will treat any of my dolls that way again."

# GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR.

BY THÉRÈSE H. MCDONNELL (AGE 9).

(Silver Badge.)

A LONG farewell; good-by, old year;  
Naught of you left but memories dear,  
Of days at school, of days at play;  
But in my heart I think and say,  
Will this forever be the way?

My happy childhood knows no pain,  
Forever sunshine, never rain.  
But this I often wish to know:  
If with my years will sorrow grow  
As after summer comes the snow.

Among my joys there come along  
Some thoughts I once have heard  
in song:  
"Will loving parents' tender care  
Be with me always everywhere?  
Will next year be to me as fair?"

But as I am so little yet,  
Let older heads than mine regret.  
I'll sing, I'll play, I'll never fear;  
The year's the same if far or near,  
And I'll shout out, "Come in, new year!"

# KRIS KRINGLE'S CHRISTMAS DREAM.

BY ETHEL MYERS (AGE 15).

It was the evening of the twenty-fourth day of December. Kris Kringle was sitting before the fire, slowly nodding his head. Suddenly the door opened, and a child stepped into the room.

The child was closely followed by more children. Indeed, there seemed to be a procession of them. Each child carried in its hand some token of the day, which they handed to Kris. The children kept coming; there seemed to be no end of them. The room was soon filled, but, like an omnibus, there was room for one more.

Kris Kringle looked at the roomful, and then commenced to speak. He spoke rather slowly, for he was getting old.

"Children, I think that none of you who are here to-night remember the time when I gave out presents instead of receiving them. A great deal of precious time was wasted in trying to give the presents as much alike as possible, for if I did not there was always sure to be a great many children pouting. Then

# HOLLY AND MISTLETOE.

BY MELTON R. OWEN, AGE 14.  
(GOLD BADGE.)

everything was changed. I did not have to work at night any more. The children were unselfish and contented. It did not matter to them if another's gift was prettier than theirs, their own always had some good points about it. There was no more pouting or—"

"Kris, Kris!"  
Was that the children calling him to continue his story?

"Kris, Kris!" The voice was louder and shriller this time. "Kris, Kris! Can I never get this man awake? Kris, you are two hours late."

Poor old Kris! He woke up only to find that he had slept away two of those precious hours of darkness, and to realize that instead of being the receiver he would have to hurry up to be the giver.

# CHRISTMAS EVE IN THE DREAMY SOUTH-LAND.

BY ISABEL WHITE (AGE 17).

LAST Christmas Eve, just as the sun was sinking below the horizon, we entered the wide mouth of the Mystic River. Our sail-boat lay quietly on the water, rising now and then as the long, low swells came in, so evenly that it seemed as if we were reclining on the heaving bosom of the great, slumbering sea. Indeed, it seemed to be sleeping, with everything so quiet, calm, and clear. The land breeze which blew all day had died out about four, and we had not yet felt the cool breath from the ocean.



"HOLLY AND MISTLETOE." BY LOIS D. WILCOX,  
AGE 12. (SILVER BADGE.)



"AUTUMN SPORTS." BY ELISABETH M. SCHELL, AGE 16.

Our little boat seemed motionless on the tide, but a glance at the long brown eel-grasses, and the pretty patches of pink and golden sands below, and the noiseless way they slipped from under us, proved that the tide bore us on.

Flapping helplessly, the limp sails clung to the masts, the rudder and oars were unmanned, and all of us gave ourselves up to enjoying that beautiful Christmas Eve in the sunny South.

Off in the distance lay a narrow blue strip of land; above stretched the great dome of heaven, and below its beautiful, quivering reflection. Here little water fairies mimicked evening's serene sky, lovingly fondled its rosy cloud-children, played tag with the graceful white sea-gulls flying to and fro, and caught the merry face of the sun just as it sank out of sight into the sea. They caught its great, misty beams, which spread like a fan above, reaching up, up through the pink-, yellow-, and blue-tinted sky into the very zenith. And there, as we looked, we saw Venus twinkling at the wee fairies as if she were perfectly contented to be rocked away on their tiny wavelets, to be scattered in golden spray at the twirl of a fish's tail, and to find herself clear and calm again in the center of a little whirlpool.

Oh, what an evening that was! Can I ever, ever forget it, or its sweet Christmas gift of love?

I think I learned to be better that evening, to be gentler, more forgiving and forbearing. Mother Nature opened to me her heart and let me know and feel for one short hour her loving God.

#### GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR.

BY AGNES D. CAMPBELL (AGE 12).

Oh, what did you bring to us, old year?  
A little of life, a little of labor,  
A little happiness, a pleasant neighbor,  
A full grade at school, a teacher dear,  
Another birthday with mother near,  
Sparkling of frost and diamonds of dew,  
Fields of cornflowers of heaven's blue.  
Oh, why must we hear your dying knell

Tolled by the boys on the college bell?  
Oh, why must we say good-by, old year?  
Oh, what did you bring to us, old year?  
The close of school, the roses of June,  
The robins' call, the larks' merry tune,  
The shining snow on the far-away hills,  
The rush of waters down hillside rills—  
A beautiful year, full of gladness and life,  
Marred as it was by war and strife.  
We love you still; why will you leave us?  
Our hearts are true; why will you grieve us?  
Oh, why must we say good-by, old year?

#### DOROTHY'S DREAM OF CHRISTMAS.

BY MABEL MURRAY (AGE 14).

DOROTHY crept into bed the night before Christmas. As she put the light out she wondered whether she could stay awake till twelve, to see Santa Claus fill her stockings. She stayed awake till about nine; then her eyelids fell, and she went fast asleep. She soon thought that she heard the tramping of little hoofs overhead.

She lay patiently till she heard a noise in the chimney rubbing, scratching, bumping, then suddenly a long slide, and a bump in the fireplace. Dorothy sat up in bed. She could see him stuffing things into her stocking.

"Santa Claus," she said, "I am awake. I see you."

The old man turned, looked anxiously about for a minute, then said, "Oh, poor little one will have nothing now. She has seen me; she has stayed up and has broken the rule." With that he vanished.

Tears came to her eyes. She called him, saying, "Oh, dear Saint, come back and forgive me, please! I meant no harm; I really did n't. Come back, please!" She fell back on her pillow, crying.

She soon stopped and lay quietly asleep. After a while she felt some one kissing her. She opened her eyes. It was daylight. Her mama was there, leaning over her bed. When she saw that Dorothy was awake she said:

"Merry Christmas, darling." Then she noticed that Dorothy's eyes were filling. "My dear, what is it?"



"WILLIAM PENN COTTAGE."  
(SEE LETTER.)



"AUTUMN SPORTS." BY MARY H. CUNNINGHAM, AGE 13.

"Oh, mama, Santa Claus has left me nothing, because I lay awake to see him." She looked at her mother wistfully.

"Why, darling, that was all a dream. Look at the mantelpiece and your stockings."

Dorothy looked, gave an exclamation of delight. "Oh, he did leave me a share of his bag, after all!"

Then she told the story to her mama, as she drew candy, nuts, and toys of all sorts from her stockings.

"Mama, was n't he good?"

"Very," said her mother, happily.

### GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR.

BY TERESA COHEN (AGE 9).

No more is spring with buds and flowers,

No more is summer, bright and fair,

Nor autumn with her red and gold,

For winter's chill is in the air.

The grass and flowers are no more,

The meadows desolate and drear,

The time has come when we must say

Good-by to the old, dying year.

### DAY-DREAM OF CHRISTMAS.

BY MARION GOODWIN EATON (AGE 13).

It was the dreamiest, shortest, laziest day of all the short Indian summer.

The little school-house stood on a side hill; in front was a souvenir-shop, on one side the summer hotels, closed and deserted now. But on the other hand the boy sitting at the open window looked dreamily across the quiet valley to the hazy mountains beyond.

A month before his peaceful country life had been interrupted by the advent of the "city folks," a mother with a boy and girl of his own age.

He was not thinking, however, of the fishing excursions, the all-day tramps, and the moonlight rides. No; he was thinking of that last day in the parlor—the day when the girl had described to him the delights of Christmas. She had shown him the dainty little things she was making for presents, and had even shown him how to waltz. In this wicked accomplishment he had taken great delight; and although by the next morning he had forgotten how, he still thought of the parties with a thrill.

He was thinking of them now. In his imagination the valley was changed to a spacious drawing-room, with its rich furnishings and fine musicians, and in the center the dancing children.

Then he heard a march struck up, and the scene changed to a dining-room. It took a longer time to arrange this scene, for he had never been into the hotel dining-room, and she had said it was much finer than even the annual church supper.

He had just got the table set and the servants arranged

to his satisfaction, when—"First class in geography!" and it was gone.

### THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

BY MARION PRINCE (AGE 10).

Blow, thou fierce north wind, blow,

For this is the eve of the new year bright,

And the old year lies on his bier of snow,

And the new year reigns to-night.

Silent the old year lies and still

In a calm and peaceful sleep,

And the bright stars shine on the snowy hill

Where angels their vigils keep.

Bury him deep in your thoughts and prayers

And old remembrances dear,

And then go back to the world and its cares,

But forget not the dear old year.



"HOLLY AND MISTLETOE." BY YVONNE JEQUIER, AGE 16. (SILVER BADGE.)

### NATURE'S GOOD-BY TO THE OLD YEAR.

BY WILLIAM CAREY HOOD (AGE 14).

The year is quickly flying,

And we must say good-by,

For now the autumn breezes

In murmuring accents sigh.

"The year is surely dying,"

All nature whispers low,

With eager expectation,

And waits the year to go.

The summer in her beauty,

The winter in his rage,

The autumn with her gorgeous tints

And glorious equipage—

They know the year is closing,

And one and all they sigh,

Then yield up of the best they have,

And this is their good-by.

## GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR.

BY LEON BONNELL (AGE 16).

WHEN the leaves turn gold and crimson,  
And the sumac blazes fire;  
When the hills are robed in beauty,  
And all earth in gay attire;  
When the sky hangs gray and leaden,  
And the fields deserted lie;  
When the frost of the night bites keenly,  
And the birds to southward fly,—  
Then farewell to the year that is closing;  
Good-by, old year, good-by!

When the leaves are dead and fallen,  
And the earth is white with snow;  
When the blaze on the hearth burns cheery,  
And the brook has ceased its flow;  
When the winds from the north are spurning,  
And the bare trees yield and sway;  
And a voice in the wintry moonlight  
Says this is stern winter's way,—  
Then hail to the year that is dawning!  
Good day, new year, good day!



"HOLLY AND MISTLETOE." BY HORACE LINNEY, AGE 14.

## GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR.

BY HILDA VAN EMSTER (AGE 14).

AS days pass on and months go by,  
The year is slowly dying.  
The spring, the fall, the seasons all  
Our souls to his are tying.  
And when his end shall come at last,  
We all shall mourn his pleasures past,  
And in his aged frosty ear  
We'll softly say, "Good-by, old year!"

The trees are clad in leafless brown,  
The wind is moaning, sighing,  
And in this dreary, snow-clad world  
The aged year is dying.  
'T is strange to think we once did cheer,  
As new-born babe, this care-worn year.  
Another stranger now we hail  
As cometh he o'er hill and dale.

Good-by, old year! Thy task is done;  
Thy rival now is nighing;

But thou art still in memory dear,  
And e'en when spring is trying  
From thee our thoughts and souls to take,  
We'll still remember, for thy sake;  
While clad in white is vale and dell,  
The wind moans on, "Old year, farewell!"

## GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR.

BY ARTHUR J. MIX (AGE 12).

THE sun is sinking in the west,  
From out a leaden sky;  
The north wind lulls the world to rest,  
And leaves the year to die.

The harvest with her golden grain  
Has left us long ago,  
And verdure on the hill and plain  
Has given place to snow.

The sun is sinking in the west,  
Out of a leaden sky;  
The north wind lulls the world to rest.  
Good-by, old year, good-by!

## WINTER.

BY MABEL FRANK (AGE 17).

THE joys of spring are over,  
The days are cold and drear;  
And where grew once the clover  
A snowdrift doth appear.

The tall trees sigh and shiver,  
And mourn from overhead,  
For by the frozen river  
A little bird lies—dead.

Poor little bird, who perished  
Under the pale-blue sky!  
Save by the Lord, uncherished,  
Left in the cold to die.

Now that thy life is over,  
Sparrow, we crave thy lay,  
Just as we long for clover  
Oft on a winter's day.

## GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR.

BY MARJORIE McIVER (AGE 13).

I've heard the bees in the garden,  
Where the last late roses fall,  
But the sighing year is drooping,  
And its death-song pervadeth all.  
When the last late rose has faded,  
And the reign of the bees is o'er,  
And the butterflies once so gaudy  
Are seen in the walks no more,  
Then the year is dying, dying.

In the cold blue vaults of the sea,  
In the fields all crisp with the night frost,  
On the long wild wastes of the lea,  
Beyond the bounds of the planet,  
And the long blue wash of its deeps,  
In some great fathomless vastness  
The ghost of the summer sleeps.

League membership is free. A stamped envelope will obtain a badge and full particulars.

## GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR.

BY ROY M. STERNE (AGE 11).

GOOD-BY, old year;  
I'm glad you're gone.  
I'm tired of tomatoes,  
Peas, and corn.

## VERSE.

BY DOROTHEA SEEBERGER  
(AGE 11).

A LITTLE bit of patience  
Often makes the sunshine  
come,  
And a little bit of love  
Makes a very happy  
home.

A little bit of hope  
Makes a rainy day look  
gay,  
And a little bit of charity  
Makes glad a weary day.

## GOOD-BY, OLD YEAR.

BY DORA CALL (AGE 12).

GOOD-BY, old year! We  
leave you

With many a heavy heart;  
For great are the joys you've brought us,  
Yes, from the very start.

We hope to find the new one  
As happy a one as you;  
And even though we'll miss you,  
We'll enjoy the new one, too.

## NOT A DAY IN THE FIELDS.

BY FRANK W. HALSEY (AGE 9).

A LITTLE kitten one day  
Thought into the fields she'd go,  
But when she got there  
She saw a black bear,  
And she did n't come back  
very slow!

## LEAGUE NOTES AND LETTERS.

THERE are still a number of very talented young people who are careless in preparing their work. More than once it has happened that out of all the pictures or poems or stories received, the very best have lacked the name, age, or address of the sender. Perhaps this will explain to some wondering contributor why his or her work did not receive recognition. Name, age, address, and indorsement—these all are very necessary, and must be in a conspicuous place on the contribution itself, not on a separate sheet, as this is likely to be lost in the great mass of work received.

Eleanor W. Talbot Smith, a teacher of Providence, R. I., sends for twenty badges for her class, and adds that the League is certainly one of the best moves St. NICHOLAS has ever made.

Of course we agree with Miss Smith, and send the twenty badges with pleasure. We are always glad to have teachers interested, and to all such will send post-paid as many badges as are required for their classes.

Eva Wilson would like the address of Pauleminia P. Skousens of Athens, Greece.

Alice Mendelsohn's address, for which a number have asked, is, care Mendelsohn Bros., Yokohama, Japan.



THE NEW YEAR'S PARTY: UNDER THE HOLLY & MISTLETOE  
BOUGHS:

BY BETH HOWARD, AGE 14.

The battle may be hard and long, but with perseverance Miss Wing will win.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We have taken you ever since I can remember, and mama took you when she was a little girl. We all look forward to the last of the month when we are at home, but since we have been abroad it is only now and again we can get you. I like trying for the puzzles, and am a League member. I wish you could give up more space to the Letter-box, as I think it is such fun reading the different letters. We spent Christmas and the New Year in Rome, and were lucky enough to see the Pope. He gave an audience to some pilgrims. We had to wait for what seemed to be ages in St. Peter's. At last he came in, carried in a chair by his Swiss body-guard. They wore the costume designed by Michelangelo. We all thought he had such a lovely old face. One day we went to see the prison of Beatrice Cenci in the Castello de San' Angelo. It is a little stone room about seven feet square, with a large pit in the middle where the bodies of the prisoners who died in prison were thrown down. This pit had no cover whatsoever, and there was barely room for the bed beside it. It was the only stick of any kind in the room. The pit has a railing around it now, but it did not use to. The only light is received through a small grating in the corner between the ceiling and the wall. We also saw the original of that picture where Beatrice Cenci has a white cloth about her head. I remain,

Your reader,  
MARY LOUISE LOGAN.

The following letter refers to the picture "William Penn's Hut," published this month.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am sending a picture that I took of a little old house known as "William Penn's Hut," at Upland, near Chester, Pa. There is a high stone wall around it. On the wall is this inscription: "House built by Calib Fuser in the year 1683 and occupied by William Penn during occasional visits."

Your interested League member,  
FREDERICA GOINA.

## A LETTER FROM THE FAR DEPTHS OF INDIA.

WOODSTOCK, MUSSOORIE, BRITISH INDIA.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I live in the Himalayas Mountains. My father and mother are the principals of the school in which I stay. Its name is "Woodstock Girls' High School," and the picture on this paper shows how the school building looks. This is a missionary school. It is situated seven thousand feet above the ocean, and we are not nearly at the top of the mountain. The flowers are very pretty; the dahlias grow wild on the hillsides. There are different kinds of orchids; some of them are red, and some



BY LUCILE COCHRAN, AGE 15.



are white. The trees have long thin ferns hanging down from their branches, which makes them look very pretty. Looking from one side of our house, we can see six or seven ranges of mountains, and on another side we look down upon the beautiful valley of Dehra, and the Sewalik Mountains on the other side. I enjoy reading the ST. NICHOLAS, and I hope you will print my letter in it. I am ten years old, and wish to become a member of the St. Nicholas League.

HELEN E. ANDREWS.

A member who puts down his age, but forgets to sign his name, sends this amusing anecdote:

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: The following is a story that I thought perhaps might please you and the readers of the ST. NICHOLAS:

A Dutch prospector had been working a mining claim for several years, when it dawned on him that there was nothing in it, so he concluded to sell out. He had his mine advertised, and finally suc-

ceeded in getting a buyer. The new owner started work where the Dutch miner had left off, and before he had gone three feet struck a big body of ore. When the Dutchman heard of it, about a week after the strike, he said, "Veil, dot was ver' funny. Next time ven I quit I go three feet furdur."

Other welcome letters have been received from Theodora Kimball, Henry Ormsby Phillips, Jean Bradshaw, Denison H. Clift, Dorothy Calman, Bessie Aubrey De Vere Bailey, Fanny R. Greg, Elisabeth Schell, Helen Frith, Marian Daves Shaw, Gwendolen G. Perry, Florence Loveland, Florence B. Bracq, Philip Beebe, Geddie Smith, Margaret E. Sayward, Audrey de Renne, Ruth G. Sterne, Ivy Varian Walshe, Randall M. Tuttle, Edna Wier, Mabel Fletcher, Caroline E. Everett, Frida Muriel Harrison, Edna Youngs, Edna Mead, Mary Gordon Collins, Mildred White, Helen Reef, William E. Hill, Gertrude T. Clarke, Monica Peirson Turner, Margaret J. Shearer, Dorothy Taussig, Miriam L. Ware, Thérèse H. McDonnell, Marguerite M. Hillery, and May H. Ryan.

### THE ROLL OF HONOR.

A LIST of those whose work has been found worthy of encouragement.

#### VERSE.

Marcia L. Webber  
Fred H. Lahee  
Margaret Aline Fellows  
Eleanor Hollis Murdoch  
Mabel Fletcher  
Janet P. Dana  
Dorothy Fosgate  
Lewie Peters  
Beulah H. Ridgeway.  
M. Letitia Stockett  
Lesley M. Storey  
Sidonia Deutsch  
Sadie E. Kennedy  
Ruth Vandye Carlin  
Tina Gray  
Lois M. Pett  
Brewer Goodsell  
Selma Tebault  
Frances P. Tilden  
Reginald Cain-Bartels  
Mary M. B. Arbuckle  
Marie Ortmyer  
Amelia F. Spear  
Marguerite Eggleston  
Rudolph Benson  
Edina Mead  
Miriam A. De Ford  
Ellen H. Skinner  
Phyllis M. Wyatt  
Marion S. Almy  
Meta Walther  
Charlotte Morrison  
Marguerite Stuart  
Agnes Churchill Lucy  
Theodora Kimball  
Marjorie Dyrenforth  
Florence Helen Wood  
Adeline E. Stone  
Helen Chapin Moody  
Alma C. Schuller  
Rowena H. Morse  
Gabrielle Tupper  
Margaret Kennedy  
Helen H. Greenough  
May Henderson Ryan  
Catherine D. Brown  
Fay Marie Hartley  
Helen M. Colter  
Margaret Stevens  
Anne Atwood  
Doris Franchlyn  
Julia Mumford

Freda Muriel Harrison  
Frances Carpenter  
Gertrude Palmer  
Marjory F. McQuiston  
Catherine M. Neale  
Lucille Owen  
A. M. Levine  
Emma L. Hawkridge  
Sarah L. Snow  
Ona Ringwood  
Carrie E. Johnston  
Pauline Taylor  
Kate H. Tiemann  
Isabelle Tilford  
Adele J. Connolly  
Henry Sokoliansky  
Helen L. Collins  
Earl D. Van Dieman  
Mayree Regan  
Martha E. Sutherland  
Edyth F. Vermeulen  
Charles R. Brady  
Bertha Westbrook  
Alice May Fuller  
Bernhard R. Naumburg  
Henry Goldman  
Phebe E. Titus  
Gertrude M. Pike  
Pearl A. Maynard  
Leila M. Messenger  
Alberta Bastedo  
Marjorie Howson  
Irwin G. Priest  
Harlow F. Pease  
Mamie M. Suddath  
Mary P. Parsons  
Florence Loveland  
Florence Mildred Caldwell  
Louise Pattison  
Lucille E. Rosenberg  
Harry E. Wheeler  
Holeta E. Giddings  
Leslie E. Pratt  
Irma C. Hanford  
M. A. Ryerson  
Ruth J. Best  
Mary Atkinson  
Graham C. Porter  
Marion S. Almy  
Anna Skidmore  
May S. Lilienthal  
Elsa Hildenbrand  
Emily Barber  
Lily Schneppe  
Sue Anderson  
Marguerite Dubois  
Gertrude Riker Leverich  
Ivy Varian Walshe  
Horace Wilkins  
Hilda B. Morris  
Mary E. Smyth  
De Witt Gutman  
Evelyn Springer  
Edith Guggenheim  
Cecilia Ritchie  
Bert Minarsky  
Nonie Gleeson  
Eleanor F. Reifsnider  
Rona Bond

Mary W. Robinson  
Marguerite Owings  
Lawrence Gray Evans  
Belle Schonwasser  
Julia Coolidge  
Mary F. Watkins  
Kathleen L. Bond  
Marion Lee Lincoln  
Jean Bradshaw  
Lucy E. Cook  
Bessie Gray  
Enza Alton Zeller  
Janie P. Mengel  
Roscoe Adams  
Mary L. French  
Louisa F. Spear  
Margaret Latham  
Erna Weil  
Harvey M. Osgood  
Ethel Whiting  
Helen E. Jelliffe  
Marion L. Weld  
Ada Hilton Green  
Gertrude Chandler Stimson  
Caroline Wood Ferris  
Mildred Valentine Ham-  
burger  
Elizabeth Lewis Slea  
Selma Einstein  
Margaret G. Wood  
Emmeline Bradshaw  
Dorothy Sidney Paul  
Louise Fritz  
Jessie Metcalf  
Harold R. Norris  
Catherine H. Straker  
Kathryn Belden  
Grace Kramer

#### DRAWINGS.

Charles Ridgely  
Louise Hurlbutt  
Harry Barnes  
Marjory Anne Harrison  
L. Simmonds  
Anna B. Carolan  
Carol Bradley  
Walter E. Werner  
Dimitri Romanowsky  
Helen T. Hawley  
Beth Howard  
Marjorie T. Hood  
Madge Falcon  
Bessie Barnes  
Ernest Becholdt  
Genevieve Taylor  
Charlotte Morton  
Ruth Osgood  
Virginia Lyman  
Fred Demmler  
Christine Hitching  
Dorothy Fry  
Nancy E. Barnhart  
Gilbert L. Merritt  
Kenneth Singer  
Helen L. Wurdemann  
Kenneth Preston  
Hermione A. Sterling  
Catherine Warner  
Mary White  
Elizabeth Bruce  
Violet Packenham

Mary M. Alexander  
Della Farley Dana  
Amy C. Thorp  
Margaret McKeon  
Thomas Porter Miller  
Rhoda E. Gunnison  
Frances D. Clark  
Alice Crane  
Margaret A. Dobson  
Alice Thorp  
Alice Barstow  
Eunice Clark Barstow  
Margaret Jane Russell  
Dorothea M. Dexter  
Edith Sherwood  
Robert E. Rogers  
Delmar G. Cooke  
Margaret Morris  
Eleanor F. Murtha  
Clifford Ostler  
Rita Wood  
Adele H. Norton  
Jean Paul Slusser  
Philip Little  
Salome K. Beckwith  
Edith G. Daggett  
Ruth G. Sterne  
Elisabeth C. Porter  
Katherine E. Foote  
Katherine Hill  
R. Fenimore Gaynore  
May S. Morel  
Monica Samuels  
Josephine Carter  
Vera M. Teape  
Viola Gaines  
Aimee Vervalen  
Annie Ostler  
Helen Crosby Edmunds  
Allen G. Miller

#### PHOTOGRAPHS.

Alcott F. Elwell  
Ruth Auster  
Dunton Hamlin  
Harold B. Kennicott  
Philip H. Suter  
Kenneth D. Van Wagenen  
Mary Thompson  
Jeanette L. McClintock  
Carol Moore  
Alice K. Bushnell  
George H. Plimpton  
Dorothy Heroy  
Fred L. Clark  
Frederick Brandenburg  
Ellen Dunwoody  
J. Chester Bradley  
Emily Storer  
Lena E. Bushnell  
Gertrude Herbert  
Jack Wayland Parker  
B. Davenport  
C. B. Andrews  
Flora Heath.  
Robert C. Lower  
Gerome Ogden  
Elizabeth L. Marshall  
Katherine R. Varick  
Margaret White  
Edna M. Duane  
Sara A. Cheesman

Philip S. Ordway  
Harriet K. Spaeth  
Mary M. P. Shipley  
Madeleine F. McDowell  
Kendall Bushnell  
Medora C. Addison  
Elisabeth H. Rice  
Mabel W. Whiteley  
Fred Scholle  
Eleanor Shaw  
Robert Y. Hayne, Jr.  
Susie H. Wilkes  
Cornelia W. Hoyt  
Anita Runge  
Marguerite Graham  
Bessie Ashton  
Evelyn Dewey  
John W. Roe  
William D. Milne

#### PUZZLES.

Robert Frederick Lau  
Richard R. Stanwood  
Dagmar Florence Curjel  
Lydia E. Bucknell  
Elizabeth H. Sherman  
Mabel B. Clark  
Alice Perkins  
Ethel Ranney  
Basil Aubrey Bailey  
Samuel Quittner  
Harold Dowling  
Margaret White  
Alice G. Twiss  
Helene Boas  
Alicia Adair Michell  
Ada C. Conner  
Joseph Wells  
Stanley Webster  
Lida Houser  
Elsie Hinz  
Nellie Littell McCulloh  
Alfred P. Merryman  
J. N. Stockett, Jr.  
Audrey Bullock  
Edward T. Hills  
Marguerite K. Goode  
Harry H. Hunter  
Rosalie L. Hausmann

#### NOTICE.

All children are welcome to the League, whether they are subscribers or not. A stamped envelope will obtain a badge and instruction leaflet.

#### PROSE.

Barbara P. Benjamin  
Anna E. Holman  
E. Tucker Sayward  
David M. Cheyney  
Marguerite Beatrice Child  
Annie L. McBirney  
Mayde Hatch  
Mary Dunn  
Howard R. Patch  
Hilda Butler  
Freda A. Snow

## CHAPTERS.

TEACHERS and others who are forming chapters may have as many badges as are needed sent at one time and in one package. Badges thus sent will be post-paid by the ST. NICHOLAS without charge.

There are no rules for forming chapters other than those given in the League leaflet. The main thing is to get together, and work and play together, and see if

one or more members of the chapter cannot succeed in getting prizes, or in having something published, or in getting on the roll of honor.

The Ozark Chapter sends a most interesting report of a summer outing it had last August. We would gladly print it if we had room.

No. 33 reports new members and new officers. If we mistake not, Bertha Janney, now president, is one of our prize-winners.

The president of Chapter 90 wishes to know if other than League members may join chapters. No; but why are they not members? They do not need to be subscribers to the magazine. They need only send for badges, and take an interest in the League department. Of course they will do that if they want to belong to the chapter. They can read the magazine at the library, or at the club

meetings, or may borrow it if they can. An interest in the League is the only requirement of members, and certainly those who wish to join chapters must be interested.

No. 107 reports ten new members.

No. 209 calls for five new badges; 299 meets Saturdays instead of Fridays, as reported.

No. 327 has begun its meetings again, and reports "fine times." 327 gave a benefit in October, with an admission charge of two cents. Meetings every other Saturday.

No. 363 calls for three more badges.

No. 368 calls for four more badges, and has taken the name of "The Golden Eagle." Weekly dues five cents. Would like to hear from other chapters. John Ross, Secretary, 312 14th St., Davenport, Ia.

## NEW CHAPTERS.

No. 370. M. Letitia Stockett, President; Alec Woolen, Secretary; seven members. Address, 1508 John St., Baltimore, Md. No. 370 meets every two weeks, and members take turns reading while the others sew.

No. 371. Frances Oldham, President; Dorothy Mathews, Secretary; three members. Address, The Auburn, Mt. Auburn, Cincinnati, O.

No. 372. Anite Dumars, President; Edith Roberts, Secretary; eleven members. Address, Glen Ridge, N. J.

No. 373. "Jolly Five." Alida Wright, President; Mary Campbell, Secretary; five members. Address, 119 Welsh St., Kane, Pa.

No. 374. Loraine Washburn, President; Julia Coolidge, Secretary; four members. Address, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Mass.

No. 375. "The Happy Two." Elizabeth Upham, President; Ruth Wintemute, Secretary; two members. Kilbourn, Wis. "The Happy Two" send a nice letter about Wisconsin which we wish we had room to print.

No. 376. "McKinley Club." Helen Mann, President; Karl Mann, Secretary; twelve members. Address, 124 Farwell Ave., Milwaukee, Wis. No. 376 will meet weekly at members' houses, and after work will have games and refreshments until home time.

No. 377. Gladys Aurand, President; Paul Bruner, Secretary; seven members. Address, 1313 Otter St., Franklin, Pa. Dues, twenty cents a month, to furnish club-room. "Any member injuring or trying to injure any bird or animal will be fined five cents."

No. 378. Fred Sullivan, President; Walter Underhill, Secretary; four members. Address, 1050 Trinity Ave., New York City.

No. 379. "U. S. Army Chapter." Eunice Hughes, President; Georgia Warner, Secretary; eighty-five members. Address, 413 1st St. N. W., Washington, D. C.



BY PHILLIP ROSS, AGE 15.

No. 380. "P. O. Chapter." Clarkson Miller, Secretary; six teen members. Address, Lock Box 21, West Liberty, Ia.

No. 381. "Earnest Workers' Naturalists Club." Marion Hopkins, President; Harriet Leopold, Secretary; fifty-five members. Address, Miss Florentine Fuld, 130 E. 110th St., New York City.

No. 382. Helen Macleish, President; Cecily Praeger, Secretary; five members. Address, 231 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, Cal.

No. 383. "Little Women." Emma Heinshemer, President; Agnes Senior, Secretary; eight members. Address, Francis Lane, Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, O.

No. 384. "Young Folks' Association." René Piperoux, President; Gertrude Theissings, Secretary; seventeen members. Address, 920 Summit Ave., Jersey City Heights, N. J.

No. 385. Florence O'Neill, Secretary; five members. Address, 475 Morewood Ave. E. E., Pittsburgh, Pa.

No. 386. Kenneth Tredwell, President; Roger Lane, Secretary; three members. Address, 14 Prospect St., Bristol, Conn.

No. 387. "Falls Village Chapter." Elsie Willey, President; Marion Alseph, Secretary; twenty members. Address, Falls Village, Conn.

## PRIZE COMPETITION No. 28.

THE St. Nicholas League awards gold and silver badges each month for the best poems, stories, drawings, photographs, puzzles, and puzzle-answers.

A SPECIAL CASH PRIZE. To any League member who has won a gold badge for any of the above-named achievements, and shall again win first place, a cash prize of five dollars will be awarded, instead of another gold badge.

Competition No. 28 will close January 15 (for foreign members January 20). The awards will be announced and prize contributions published in ST. NICHOLAS for April.

VERSE. To contain not more than twenty-four lines, and may be illustrated, if desired, with not more than two drawings or photographs by the author. Subject to contain the word "fireside."

PROSE. Story, article, or play of not more than four hundred words. It may be illustrated, if desired, with not more than two drawings by the author. Subject, "One Rainy Day," and must be a true story. May be humorous or serious.

PHOTOGRAPH. Any size, mounted or unmounted, but no blue prints or negatives. Subject, "Deepest Winter."

DRAWING. India ink, very black writing-ink, or wash (not color). Subject, "Going to School," and must be from observation.

PUZZLE. Any sort, the answer to contain some word or words relating to the season.

PUZZLE-ANSWERS. Best, neatest, and most complete set of answers to puzzles in this issue of ST. NICHOLAS.

WILD ANIMAL OR BIRD PHOTOGRAPH. To encourage the pursuing of game with a camera instead of a gun. For the best photograph of a wild animal or bird, taken in its natural home: First Prize, five dollars and League gold badge. Second Prize, three dollars and League gold badge. Third Prize, League gold badge.

## RULES FOR ALL COMPETITIONS.

EVERY contribution of whatever kind must bear the name, age, and address of the sender, and be indorsed as "original" by parent, teacher, or guardian, who must be convinced beyond doubt that the contribution is not copied, but wholly the work of the sender.

If prose, the number of words should also be added. These things must not be on a separate sheet, but on the contribution itself—if a manuscript, on the upper margin; if a picture, on the margin or back. Write or draw on one side of the paper only. A contributor may send but one contribution a month—not one of each kind, but one only. Members are not obliged to contribute every month. Address all communications:

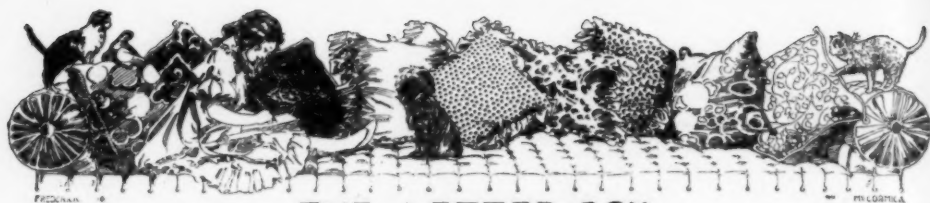
THE ST. NICHOLAS LEAGUE,  
Union Square,  
New York.



BY LOUIS W. CRUTTENDEN, AGE 7.



BY MARY HAZELTON FEWSMITH, AGE 12.



## THE LETTER-BOX.

### EDITOR'S NOTE.

THE editor wishes to say that the verses on page 206 were published some years ago, and are reprinted now by special request in connection with Mr. Alexander's beautiful picture shown on page 207.

#### GREYCLIFFE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I live in Central Queensland, in the bush, sixty-five miles from the nearest railway; but a coach comes up every week from there, to ten miles past here—seventy-five miles, which distance it travels in one day.

I amuse myself by playing with what I call horses, but which are really pieces of pine board, with tails made of stuff tacked on, and a cut made for their mouths. I have saddles and bridles for them, and have made a lot of yards for them inside the garden and out; also some dams, a well, and a dip. I buy horses from my mate Charlie, who lives four miles from here, and he buys some from me.

I have two real horses besides; one is a pony who is twenty years old, but who can canter fast, and jump, too. We often go out after cattle, and have fun when they are being drafted to go to the meat works or to different paddocks.

My sister Emma has a pet magpie named "Tig," who got burnt when he was young, and now only boasts of five claws and a short under beak.

There are numbers of kangaroos and dingos here; the latter may often be heard at night howling in packs of twos and threes.

We have a lot of fruit here in the summer; the grapes especially are very fine; dozens of birds come to eat them, and have to be shot. The bower-birds are very funny, as they can copy any sound they hear about the place; but they have to be shot, as they eat the fruit so.

Yours truly,  
FRED G. N. NOTT (age 8).

#### PLACETAS, CUBA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have taken you for a number of years and like you very much.

My father is a captain of the Second Cavalry. This is a queer little town, with two troops here and five officers.

The windows here are as large as doors, but they have iron bars on them. They have big blinds the whole length of the window, with little windows cut in them. They are on the inside of the house.

From the 1st of December to the 24th they (the people of Cuba) have torch-light parades every night. They carry torches and different-colored paper lights. Each town is divided into two parts. One parade one night, the other the next. The night of the 24th they both parade, and afterward the people decide which was best. The names of these districts are Fortun and Zaza. Zaza had the best parade this Christmas, but Fortun had the prettier decorations in its district. We, all of the Americans, live in Fortun.

Most of the people of Cuba live in huts made of the green bark of the royal palm-tree, under the big leaves which are used to make the roof, and they used to make rope of the trunk, but there is a fine now against cutting these trees. The rest of the buildings are made of wood with tiled roofs. There are very few stone houses or plastered ones on this island. I have been to Matanzas and Caibarien, and expect to see more of the island soon. There is an orphan asylum at Remedios. Some of the girls sent me a little rag doll they made. It is very queer. Mama ordered two Cuban dolls to be made for Christmas, but as they were to be made by an old lady they are not finished yet. I saw some that they are to be like, and am very anxious to get them.

Most of the people in the United States think that Cuba is very warm all of the time, but here in Placetas it gets pretty cool in the winter; sometimes we have to wear winter dresses and wraps; but we get oranges, bananas, pineapples, and fresh vegetables all of the time, also coconuts. The Cuban olives are just about the size of my second-finger nail, and I am eleven years old—twelve 1st of March.

I have a parrot, a pony, and a bicycle. There are not many places in Cuba that you can ride a wheel, but this is a little country town with good roads. Placetas is supposed to be the healthiest town on the island. I liked "Denise and Ned Toodles" very much, and was anxious when "Pretty Polly Perkins" came out, by the same author. I also liked "Betty," and was glad when she found her mother.

My parrot's name is "Jim." He talks a great deal. His very cunning trick is, when any one knocks on the door he will yell, "Come in." Then he will knock on his perch with his bill and say, "Come in." Often when I go out to his perch I knock with my finger on it and say, "Come here, Jim"; so he knocks with his bill and says, "Come here, Jim," just as I do. He bites, and so we are afraid to teach him to get on our finger, but he will get on a stick and on my arm. He walked up on my shoulder the other day and bit my ear. I punished him, and he has not done it again. I must close now, so good-by.

I remain, your constant reader,  
HELEN W. GARDNER.

#### FORT GRANT, ARIZONA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am an army girl, and I travel around a great deal. Year before last I was in Cuba, and I stayed there a year and a half.

Often we would have a cloud-burst. Last year papa was ordered away to Fort Grant, Arizona. There is an Apache Indian camp a half-mile from the post, and I see a great many Indians.

They make some of the most beautiful baskets and olles I ever saw. We have a great many Navajo rugs that we sent for to Fort Wingate, New Mexico.

They are made by the Navajo Indians. The post is situated at the foot of the Graham Mountains.

Sincerely,  
MARGUERITE COLE.



## ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE DECEMBER NUMBER.

**DOUBLE ACROSTIC.** Primals, Mark Twain; finals, Tom Sawyer. Cross-words: 1. Minuet. 2. Adagio. 3. Rhythm. 4. Knives. 5. Topeka. 6. Willow. 7. Airily. 8. Induce. 9. Nearer.

**A CHRISTMAS TREE.** From 1 to 2, Christmas gift. Cross-words: 1. C. 2. She. 3. Korea. 4. Unity. 5. Rosa. 6. Victory. 7. G. 8. I. 9. Off.

Germany. 8. Ecuador. 9. Assisting. 13. Noted.

**WORD-SQUARE.** 1. Alert. 2. Liver. 3. Evade. 4. Redan. 5. Trend.

**BEHEADINGS.** Christmas tree. 1. Cape. 2. H-arm. 3. R-ate. 4. I-con. 5. Sale. 6. T-all. 7. M-ask. 8. A-tom. 9. S-and. 10. T-art. 11. R-ice. 12. E-den. 13. E-spy.

**RHYMED NUMERICAL ENIGMA.** "Glory to God in the highest, and peace, good will toward men."

**ZIGZAG.** Santa Claus. Cross-words: 1. Mars. 2. Tear. 3. Anna. 4. Tiny. 5. Pail. 6. Mace. 7. Call. 8. Reap. 9. Luck. 10. Sole.

**A CHRISTMAS ZIGZAG.** From 1 to 2, Christmas; 3 to 4, mistletoe. Cross-words: 1. Cayman. 2. Philip. 3. Arrows. 4. Limits. 5. Sailor. 6. Etcher. 7. Summit. 8. Tailor. 9. Stream.

**A FINAL ZIGZAG.** Christmas. Cross-words: 1. Peach. 2. Mirth. 3. Pearl. 4. Chili. 5. Horse. 6. Giant. 7. Pygmy. 8. India. 9. Pause.

**CONNECTED DIAMONDS.** I. 1. B. 2. Arm. 3. Bring. 4. End. 5. G. II. 1. F. 2. Ell. 3. Fling. 4. Inn. 5. G. III. 1. S. 2. Oak. 3. Sable. 4. All. 5. E. IV. 1. S. 2. Ape. 3. Spare. 4. Era. 5. E. From 1 to 2 and from 3 to 4, gifts.

TO OUR PUZZLERS: Answers, to be acknowledged in the magazine, must be received not later than the 15th of each month, and should be addressed to ST. NICHOLAS RIDDLE-BOX, care of THE CENTURY CO., 33 East Seventeenth St., New York City.

ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES IN THE OCTOBER NUMBER were received, before October 15th, from M. McG.—Daniel Milton Miller—Olive R. T. Griffin—Mabel George, and Henri—Edgar Whitlock—Florence and Edna—"The Thayer Co."—Allil and Adi—Helen C. Perry—Kathrine Forbes Liddell—Edythe R. Carr—Mary L. Pusey—Harriet F. Seaver—Nettie Lawrence—Kenneth Dows—Louise Atkinson—Esther, Clare, and Constance—Doris Webb—Margaret Wilkie Gilholm—Rachel Rhoades—Emily P. Burton—Sara Lawrence Kellogg.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE OCTOBER NUMBER were received, before October 15th, from Ruth Frost, 4—Willie Naseth, 2—Louise Manny, 4—Helen Humphreys, 6—Elizabeth Clarke, 2—Sidney K. Eastwood, 4—"The Spencers," 11—Marguerite Sturdy, 11—John M. Blaikie, 11—Bessie G. Gallup, 9—Agnes R. Lane, 4—Grace L. Craven, 6—"Peter Quince and Robin Starveling," 3—"Pine Bluff Camp," 7—William G. Rice, Jr., 2—Edward J. Smith, Jr., 3—Lowell Walcutt, 4—Winifred Mudge, 1—Percival C. Smith, 1—Claire L. Sidenberg, 1—Dorothy Boyle, 1—Pierson Clair, 1—Ruth E. Frost, 1—Pauline Mode, 1—Fay Ressmeyer, 1—Fanny A. Faunce, 1—Gertrude P. Leverich, 1—T. Longenecker, 1—Dorothy D. Andrews, 1.

## WORD-SQUARE.

I. PROPER. 2. A feminine name. 3. An Arabian military commander. 4. A weed. JULIA DODGE.

## OVERLAPPING SQUARES.

(Silver Badge, St. Nicholas League Competition.)

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.....  
.....  
.....  
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I. UPPER SQUARE: 1. A religious superior. 2. The supreme god of the Canaanites. 3. Part of the name of a poor wood-cutter in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. 4. An exclamation.

II. LEFT-HAND SQUARE is the same as the upper square.

III. CENTRAL SQUARE: 1. Part of the name of the wood-cutter. 2. An interjection. 3. Ignoble. 4. A certain tribe mentioned in St. Luke.

IV. RIGHT-HAND SQUARE: 1. Foundation. 2. A

certain tribe mentioned in St. Luke. 3. The father of Lotan. 4. Goes astray.

V. LOWER SQUARE is the same as the right-hand square. ROGER E. CHASE, JR.

## PROGRESSIVE NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

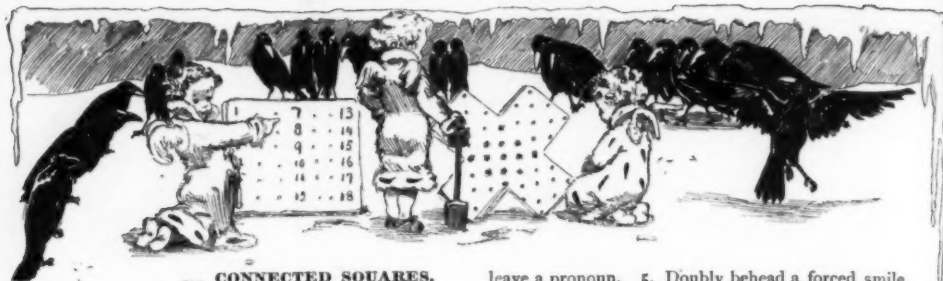
WHEN 1-2-3 and 1-2-3-4 were looking for geological specimens, they asked 3-4-5-6, who was examining a red 5-6-7, where 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 could be found; and he answered, "In the dictionary." ANNA M. PRATT.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

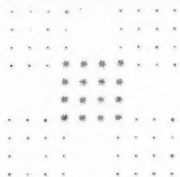
My primals, reading downward, and my finals, reading upward, spell a pleasant greeting.

CROSS-WORDS: 1. An originator. 2. A province of Italy. 3. To cause to disappear by rubbing out. 4. To redden. 5. To draw again. 6. A nickname for a native of New England. 7. A city of China. 8. Submissively. 9. To get an equivalent or compensation for. 10. Part of the foot. 11. A tribe of Indians who formerly lived in western New York. 12. A long, hollow vessel for holding water or other liquid. 13. Not sound and healthful. 14. To rouse from sleep or torpor. 15. A great desert.

ROBERT FREDERICK LAU (League Member).



## CONNECTED SQUARES.



I. UPPER LEFT-HAND SQUARE: 1. Nocturnal birds. 2. To stay. 3. Similar. 4. Part of a flower.

II. UPPER RIGHT-HAND SQUARE: 1. A musical instrument. 2. To bubble. 3. Combustible substances obtained from animals, vegetables, and minerals. 4. Otherwise.

III. CENTRAL SQUARE: 1. Part of a horse. 2. Agile animals. 3. Low. 4. To discern.

IV. LOWER LEFT-HAND SQUARE: 1. Empty. 2. Surface. 3. Quiet. 4. Devours.

V. LOWER RIGHT-HAND SQUARE: 1. Christmas-tide. 2. On. 3. A burden. 4. Extreme points.

LESTER SICHEL (League Member).

## PRIMAL ACROSTIC.

When the following words have been rightly guessed, the initial letters will spell the surname of a famous Swedish botanist.

CROSS-WORDS: 1. A certain fruit which was said to make those who ate of it forget their native country. 2. A vine which is the subject of a poem by Charles Dickens. 3. A common flower of many shades of yellow. 4. A flower named after a beautiful youth who fell in love with his own reflection in a fountain. 5. A common fall wild flower. 6. A large, coarse herb with yellow flowers. 7. A botanical word meaning "having only one leaf." 8. A fruit highly commended by Izaak Walton.

## A DOUBLY BEHEADED ACROSTIC.

(Gold Badge, St. Nicholas League Competition.)

(EXAMPLE: Doubly behead a hard substance, and leave a number. Answer, St-one.)

When the following words have been rightly guessed and doubly beheaded, the initials of the remaining words will spell a word often heard during the Christmas holidays.

CROSS-WORDS: 1. Doubly behead to wear away, and leave part of the body. 2. Doubly behead cargo, and leave a number. 3. Doubly behead coldness, and leave to attend. 4. Doubly behead a hymn of praise, and

leave a pronoun. 5. Doubly behead a forced smile, and leave a preposition. 6. Doubly behead to devise, and leave a small aperture. 7. Doubly behead to broil, and leave sick. 8. Doubly behead a place for offerings, and leave a product of the pine-tree. 9. Doubly behead to unite, and leave a pronoun. 10. Doubly behead to satisfy, and leave comfort. 11. Doubly behead a flag, and leave a token.

GERTRUDE HELEN SCHIRMER.

## CHARADE.

You 'LL hardly like to make my first  
In school, or play, or any time;  
And yet 't is often charming, too,  
And idolized in verse and rhyme.

And some of you, if you will scan  
Your envelopes, will see the word,  
For every mile contains my next,  
Each foot, a number of my third.

A ship is taken in my third,  
When sails no longer deck the mast;  
My second is a letter, and  
Of flax and hemp they make my last.

My whole is often mentioned now,  
But ne'er in sad or solemn mood;  
Yet years ago it killed, 't is said,  
A god both beautiful and good.

DORIS WEBB

(Winner of a gold badge).

## DIAMOND.

1. In elegant. 2. A very large bird, now extinct.  
3. What you are not, if you solve this puzzle. 4. To request. 5. In elegant.

## CONCEALED CENTRAL ACROSTIC.

I AM a leader — I begin  
The centuries as they roll in.

## CROSS-WORDS:

1. When Madam Alma Jorray taught  
Her famous school of ancient thought,
2. An Arab, a seditious youth,  
Declared she wandered from the truth.
3. He said it turned his blood to ice  
To hear her calling Plato nice.
4. But when she crowned his bust with flowers,  
And sighed, "An ancestor of ours,"
5. He scowled at such a rank offense,  
And cried, "It rains — I must go hence."
6. And in a tremor, all at once  
He shouted, "Plato is a dunce!"
7. Now Madam Jorray edifies  
The scholars not unduly wise.

ANNA M. PRATT.







"GUNNER POINTING LED THEM TO THE PARAPET AND POINTED  
TO THE GREAT BOW OF THE OPEN OCEAN."

(See the story, "An Anglo-American Alliance," page 205.)